

In Austria. A progressive legal code made it a criminal offence, but the inherited social code made duelling mandatory. And the courts of honour of the officer corps operated in open defiance of the law. From an early stage Schnitzler satirizes this archaic code. But at the same time he succumbs to the fascination exerted by the duel, and time and again his writings exploit the thrill of violent premature death. In Schnitzler's fictional world the mortality rate runs high. Thus death by duelling forms the climax of what Reinhard Urbach claims to be Schnitzler's masterpiece, *Das weite Land* (now translated by Tom Stoppard under the title *Undiscovered Country*). But this traditional *coup-de-théâtre* undermines the rigour of his modern comedy of manners.

These same strengths and limitations are evident in Schnitzler's diaries. So far only a single volume, *Tagebuch 1909-1912*, has been published, but they cover the whole period from 1879 until his death in 1931, fifty-two of the most momentous years of Austrian history. In accordance with his wishes, the diary is to be published complete and unaltered, and this immense task is being undertaken by a team of researchers led by Werner Welzig, under the auspices of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The enormous bulk of the entries made by Schnitzler almost daily in a hand hard to decipher, abounding in cryptic abbreviations and obscure proper names, must make this one of the most formidable editorial tasks ever tackled.

Technically, this first volume is an impressive achievement. An introduction by Professor Welzig establishes the scope and nature of the project. Even the most inconsequential details in the diary are clearly and faithfully reproduced. And meticulously compiled indexes identify references to over a thousand named individuals, as well as to Schnitzler's own writings.

The historical importance of the diaries is unquestionable. They form a kind of *Who's Who* of cultural life in Vienna. For Schnitzler was not a writer who worked in isolation. He was a convivial man whose ideas were filtered through a complex cultural environment. He would dictate his work to his secretary, read the first drafts out loud to his wife or to a small circle of friends, and then revise his work in the light of their comments. He was constantly comparing notes with other authors (like Beer-Hofmann or Wassermann) or with editors who might publish his work (like Moritz Benedikt of the *Neue Freie Presse*). His plays were then submitted to theatre directors, read by members of the cast, revised, submitted to the censor, revised again, and then subjected to final cuts and revisions. The diaries enable us to follow this process in fascinating detail.

They also document Schnitzler's assimilation of intellectual stimuli from other writers. He was a conscientious reader, noting down almost everything. His preoccupation with psychoanalysis can be traced in particular details. He read the *Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900, shortly after it was published, and was in personal contact with members of Freud's circle. Through his wife he was also involved with the Viennese musical scene, so that Mahler and Bruno Walter figure prominently in the diaries. The sphere of literary journalism is also vividly documented from the inside. Schnitzler was on personal terms with many of the leading journalists and editors of the day, but at times his contacts on their professional conduct and moral character are quite devastating. The diaries thus offer private confirmation of the astute judgments which Karl Kraus was passing in public in the satirical pages of *Die Fackel*; and they provide a mine of information for the cultural historian.

Their literary status, however, is more doubtful. On the evidence of this first volume they are unlikely to rank high among writings in diary form. The diary consists essentially of jottings, recording the disconnected events of Schnitzler's daily routine. There is little attempt at sustained argument or elegance of style. And there is none of that intellectual excitement generated by

the diaries of (say) Thomas Mann or Robert Musil. It might of course be argued that the diarist is a writer off duty, who need satisfy no one but himself. But the standards which a writer sets for himself are nevertheless revealing, and Schnitzler is on record as saying that he believed his diaries would rank with the greatest achievements of any author. After quoting this claim, Welzig goes on to argue that the diary should be read not as a document, but as the organization of experience in verbal form. But the verbal texture is generally so thin that its fundamental significance must be sought elsewhere. It seems to lie in Schnitzler's preoccupation with the dimension of time.

Schnitzler's writings are haunted by evanescence. The worst immortality (as he defines it in a diary note of July, 1913) is the failure to grasp and enjoy the given moment of time (den Augenblick genießen). The painstaking attempt to record how he spent every morning, every afternoon, every evening of his adult life emerges as an attempt to fortify the self against transience and oblivion. It is an exercise in self-confirmation. But what is being confirmed in the diaries of 1909-12 is not intensity of the emotional life. Apart from references to talking through the stresses of his marriage, there is little sense of accumulated emotional experience. The diaries live only in the present. But they try to fill that present with a sense of the redeeming function of his tireless labours as a writer. Schnitzler insistently emphasizes his meticulous literary craftsmanship, his repeated revisions, his concern to add "the final polish". He fits into the pattern which Roland Barthes identified of the postmodernist author for whom the activity of writing becomes existentially self-validating. But the impression left by these diaries is one of self-consolation, rather than self-confirmation. The repeated suggestion is that although he may not have achieved what he wished, he could not possibly have worked at it harder.

This is linked with Schnitzler's remarkably acute powers of self-assessment. He knew that his writings were good, but he also knew that they were never as good as he intended. He recognized that he would never be an author of the first rank, and his reflections on this problem constitute one of the most intriguing dimensions of the diary. He was acutely sensitive to the fact that critics who praised his work tended to rely on all too predictable repertoire of clichés. His reflections on the ironies of fame are particularly revealing at the time of his fiftieth birthday. Productions of his plays are being staged in about a hundred different theatres throughout the German-speaking world. He receives nearly five hundred congratulatory letters and telegrams. But he cannot quite suppress the thought that the solitary dissenting voice (that of Kraus in *Die Fackel*) may come closer to the truth than all this adulation.

The cool and sceptical voice of the diarist thus has certain attractions. But the major deficiency lies in the failure to sustain arguments and carry them through to their ultimate conclusions. What is revealed here is not only Schnitzler's limitations as a diarist, but also the half-heartedness of his liberalism. There is a lack of intellectual rigour in his willingness to see both sides of almost any question. His documents published by Friedjung in 1908 to justify war against Serbia were admittedly forgeries. But this should not lead one to doubt Friedjung's integrity. The journalist Felix Salten is unquestionably a scoundrel. But when one thinks about it he's really quite a good chap after all. The theatre director Berger is strikingly disreputable bargains with the clerical faction of the Burgtheater, but one has to cooperate with him if one wants to see his plays performed.

The inadequacy of this position is particularly evident in Schnitzler's attitude to politics. In the period 1909-12, the years of his greatest talents, Austria was drifting towards dictatorship. The shadow of the authoritarian Franz Ferdinand falls heavily across these years. Passing references to the prospect of war become increasingly frequent. But in Schnitzler's notes, as in his



Arthur Schnitzler on the Adriatic coast during a Mediterranean holiday in March, 1905, from Arthur Schnitzler: *Sein Leben - Sein Werk - Seine Zeit*.

published writings, politics are firmly defined as a matter of marginal importance. He emphatically refuses to write an article about his political opinions for the *Neue Freie Presse*. "Politics destroys the character", he is repeatedly assured. But at times the inadequacy of this response is perceived by the diarist himself, for everywhere politics come creeping back, in a displaced form. Antisemitic cycling-clubs are merely the extreme instance of a pervasive phenomenon. The theatre itself is a battleground between contending factions. The Czechs are extending their influence in one area, the Cler-

icals in another. The press is in the hands of propagandists. And everywhere there is the creeping shadow of antisemitism. All of this is clearly glimpsed and conscientiously recorded. Schnitzler is particularly scathing on Jews who deny their own ethnic identity and take refuge in an exaggerated German patriotism or Christian piety. But although he notes the danger signals, he never reaches any critical conclusions. The situation is desperate, but not serious (to quote the characteristic Austrian adage). And the scepticism of his diaries is ultimately as evasive as that of his published writings.

Thus antisemitism for Schnitzler is essentially a psychological problem - "die ungeliebte Idee, im seelischen liegende Problem der Juden" (September 24, 1910). And he complains that no reader of his novel *Der Weg ins Freie* has yet been able to respond to his treatment of the Jewish question "rein künstlerisch" - in purely artistic terms.

Schnitzler's achievement lies within the limits of the aestheticism so characteristic of the Habsburg liberal intelligentsia. His writings combine the portents of a brave new world with epitaphs for a vanished age.

Tending to the literal

By R. J. Hollingdale

MICHAEL HAMBURGER (Translator):
An Unofficial Rite
Poems 1912-1926
118pp. Anvil Press. £3.95.
0 85646 077 X

Dryden distinguished three kinds of verse translation and called them metaphrase, paraphrase and imitation. Metaphrase is "word by word, and line by line" translation, and Dryden rejected it, as he did imitation, in favour of paraphrase, which he defined as "translation with latitude, where the author is kept in view by the translator, so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly followed as his sense".

This looks like, and is, a sound English compromise; yet, like all sound compromises and middle ways, it is an enemy, not only of what is worse, but also of what is better, namely the ideal. Now it seems obvious that an ideal verse translation is a metaphrase of its original, and that Dryden rejected metaphrase because he thought it unachievable. Metaphrases which fall as poetry are likely to be valuable altogether, but that fact might lead one to confirm - on the "lilies that the flowers yell" - that the successful metaphrase would be the ideal.

In any event, perfect metaphrase is what Michael Hamburger strives after. He has never so far as I know, acknowledged it in plain words, but what he has said about his procedure, and his translations themselves, leave little room for doubt. In the 1964 preface to his *Hölderlin translations*, after firmly rejecting imitation as having "become a kind of occupational therapy for poets past or temporarily disabled", he says he has "tried to get under the original poet's skin". "Thought will often adapt a passage where I feel that a

literal rendering would create an effect different from that intended by the poet... my overall purpose is to reproduce even those peculiarities of his diction, form and way of thinking and feeling which are alien both to myself and to English conventions. My assumption is that the reader who cannot cope with the original text does not want my personal response to it as much as he wants to get as close as possible to the text itself.

What this endeavour leads to in practice is a serious attempt at successful "word by word, and line by line" translation. Here is a very brief illustration and a comparison with the practice of a differently minded translator, David Gascoyne: first Gascoyne, then Hölderlin, then Hamburger:

When I heard
That Patmos was among the nearest
I longed to disembark
And to approach its gloomy caves.

Und da ich hörte
Der nahgelegenen eine
Sei Patmos
Verlangte mich sehr
Dort einzukehren und dort
Der dunkeln Grotte zu nahen.

And when I heard
That of the near islands one
Was Patmos,
I greatly desired
There to be lodged, and there
To approach the dark grotto.

In this instance, not only is Hölderlin much closer to Michael Hamburger's shape and rhythm, his decision to imitate the form has also given him scope to render the meaning of some of the individual words more precisely. It is, I think, a victory for metaphrase.

Hamburger was awarded last year's Schlegel Prize for his translations of Paul Celan; now we have his versions of forty-three poems of Rilke; and again we have a

demonstration of how successful and satisfactory an all-but-literal rendering of a poem can be. Another illustration will make the point: first J. B. Leishman, then Rilke, then Hamburger:

Women, that you should be moving
among us,
here, among us, sadly;
not more sheltered than we, and
able to bless like the blessed!

Oh, dass ihr hier, Frauen,
hier unter uns, leidvoll,
nicht geschter als wir und dennoch
selig zu machen wie Selige.

Oh, that you walk about, women,
here in our midst, suffering,
not more spared than we are, yet
to grant bliss like the blessed.

The differences between the two versions are not great; but where they do differ, I think the latter is an improvement, being both better poetry and closer to the original.

The small number of rhyming poems in this selection presents, of course, a different problem, and it is one that is sometimes "solved" by ignoring the rhymes: yet in every case the degree of "paraphrase" of the original is minimal.

Eine Furche in meinem Hirn,
eine Linie meiner Hand;
hieß die Gewohnheit stand,
wird sie mir beides verwirren.

A furrow in my brain,
a line on my hand;
it habit prevails again
both it will blur, confound.

The book's title means only that the poems included were either not published or not published in collection during Rilke's lifetime: the slight suggestion that they are also very little known is plainly not intended, since "Handliners" and "Ausgesetz auf den Bergen des Herzens" are among them.

Cudgelling and cogitating

By Paul Johnson

IAN HAMILTON:
Koestler
398pp. Secker and Warburg. £12.
0 436 19101 6

This biographical study has had a difficult gestation and, like any such work written during the subject's lifetime, it has shortcomings. But to anyone who cares about the battle of ideas in the twentieth century it is fascinating. How could it not be? Arthur Koestler is the archetypal intellectual of the totalitarian age, an age when intellectuals lived dangerously. He served in all its campaigns, suffered in its goals, wears its battle-honours, collected an honourable scar or two. The amazing thing is that he survived at all, to live into serene old age, having produced a body of work formidable by any standards. Ian Hamilton's narrative records how many of Koestler's colleagues fell victim to the tyrannies they served or fought.

It is important to the Koestler story that he was born not only a Jew but a Hungarian Jew, for Hungary, more than Germany, more even than Austria, was the great loser at Versailles: Hungarian Jews of the interwar period were involved in a double diaspora. Koestler began as a Zionist; went to Palestine, hated it, served the liberal-Jewish Ullstein newspaper group first as a Middle East correspondent, then in Paris, then in Berlin as a science editor. He joined the Communist Party as an agent, was sacked when his activities were revealed, went to Russia (in Stalin's great famine), returned to Paris to work in Muenzenberg's factory, then to Spain, where the fascists twice had the opportunity to murder him. He broke with the party at precisely the moment that Stalin's assassins were roaming the world looking for such defectors. In 1940 he showed himself to be overtaken by the German invasion in France - carelessness for a man with his record - and was forced to join the Foreign Legion to escape. By the time he got to wartime Britain he was gruesomely familiar with the inside of camps, gaols and execution-sheds all over Europe and had already written his masterpiece, *Darkness at Noon*. He knew the grey down to its last rubber stamp, and it is something comic in this angry survivor shouting at the bewildered British officials: "I demand to be interrogated".

As an ex-Communist Koestler continued to take risks. In the 1940s and 1950s no other individual was more effective, both through his writings and organizational activities, in alerting the West to the horrors and dangers of Stalinism. For many years he was a favourite hate-figure of Moscow and, while he lived in France, of the corrupt and violent French CP. *Humanité* published a large-scale map of the region where Koestler lived, with an arrow pointing to his house. "This is the headquarters of the Cold War," where Chip Bohlen, the American Ambassador, trains his para-military fascist militia.

Koestler increased the hazards by his own reckless way of living. Hamilton has had access to letters written by his second wife, Maimane Pagel, which provide a lurid picture of drinking bouts and ferocious rows:

... he suddenly worked himself into a rage and stamped about knocking things over (having been knocked over the kitchen table and bespattered in all with wine). Agnes and I spent the rest of the evening mopping up wine, whiskey and blood, glass and china; K also broke a couple of chairs and a lamp, and almost broke his foot kicking at things, so is now limping about.

In 1949, in Paris, he got drunk, fell asleep in his car, was arrested and hit a commissaire. *L'Humanité* called him "the Trotskyite Arthur Koestler", the specialist in anti-Sovietism, the licensed insulter of the French people - ah! the anti-Soviet forces choose their heroes well!" and the CP press foamed at the mouth when he was only fined: "Just imagine what would have happened to an ordinary peace-fighter! Paris seems to have brought out the excitable side of Koestler's intellectualism. Simone de Beauvoir, whose novel *Les Mandarins* supposedly portrays an affair with Koestler, recorded one night out in her memoirs:

... he returned to the theme of "No friendship without political agreement". ... Suddenly Koestler threw a glass at Sartre's head and it smashed against the wall on the sidewalk and laughing helplessly when Koestler finally decided to climb back up the stairs, we all four were fevered to continue his quarrel with Sartre. "Come on let's go home," said Camus, laying a friendly hand on his shoulder: Koestler shrugged the hand off and hit Camus, who then tried to hurl himself on his aggressor.

Were such episodes important? Probably not. They tended to occur when Koestler's work was going badly, or when he was publicizing rather than writing his books. The fact is that, throughout these fevered post-war years he produced a great deal of high-quality writing which itself demanded a prodigious amount of reading. His violence and what, to

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judged from Maimane's letters, was an adamant egotism, were balanced by a power of attraction which led her to write:

I am awfully happy with K simply because I do love him so much. ... I shall consider my life has been well spent since I spent six years of it with K. ... I greatly believe in K as a writer, and I would do anything, even leave him, if it were necessary to help him to fulfil what I believe to be his destiny.

The reader of Hamilton's account is bound to ask whether the importance of the work merited such devotion. Intellectuals tend to be selfish and demanding because the essence of an intellectual is that he gives ideas a higher priority than people. In this sense Koestler is the quintessential intellectual. He once described his life as stumbling along his zig-zag path, pulled in opposite directions by political fanaticism and contemplative detachment. It is true that his earlier scientific interests yielded to communism, then anti-totalitarianism, then in the 1950s came back to science again, and in recent years to the paranormal. But in a sense it is all the same pursuit of ideas, for their own sake as well as for their impact on humanity. What was that he believed it was a "scientific" system; he dropped it when he found that, beneath its modernistic

veneer, it was just an old-fashioned affair of lies and thuggery. The freedom he then embraced could not be made into a scientific system but it was linked to science in that it made possible unrestricted enquiry, something Marxist "science" could not permit. Koestler came to see that the solution to the human predicament (he claimed he was a short-term pessimist, a long-term optimist) lay in the scientific imagination, which for him replaced politicians' utopianism as man's best hope and which he made his chief object of study. So his life is much more of a piece than it seems at first glance and - certainly as Hamilton presents it - has revolved round concepts rather than people. There is, however, one important exception to this proposition: Koestler's intense, protracted and ultimately highly successful campaign against capital punishment, which Hamilton describes well and in detail and which was essentially prompted not by intellectual notions but by the actual observation in gaol of people who knew or feared they were going to be executed.

Koestler's anti-hanging campaigning is a key to his spirit: it is impossible to imagine Sartre, for instance, devoting such a large part of his life and energies to such a "peripheral" cause. The great thing about Koestler is that he is a loner; he has never hunted with an intellectual pack.

Up from the pit-face

By Kenneth O. Morgan

JOE GORMLEY:
Battered Cherry
216pp. Hamish Hamilton. £7.95.
0 241 10754 7

"Joe could bargain the buttons off your trousers", a National Coal Board official once observed, apparently with enthusiasm. Certainly Joe Gormley has always been a sharp fellow. As the fourth of seven children born to a mining family in Ashton-in-Makerfield, he was, he tells us, "born to a negotiating position". From then on, things generally went pretty well. As a youth, he was lucky in fights, lucky with girls he met while "sparking" in the local hayfields, lucky (at least sometimes) in his compulsive gambling on horses. Fortune was generally on his side during a rapid ascent in the stormy world of the National Union of Mineworkers. A rare failure would invariably be turned to good advantage. An unsuccessful attempt to emigrate to Australia in 1953 saw him migrate to Staffordshire instead, with rapid promotion to the miners' national executive as a result. Disappointed in early political ambitions (he was turned down for nomination as Labour candidate for Burnley owing to his anti-CND views), he soon followed Sam Watson on to the Labour Party NEC. Defeated by Lawrence Daly for the union secretaryship in 1966, he bounced back to trounce his opponents in winning the presidency three years later. Thereafter, whether in industrial confrontation or (more characteristically) in deft diplomacy over beer and sandwiches, things have usually gone his way.

Joe is a generous, outgoing man. Like the American Sam Gompers of the AF of L, whom he much resembles, Gormley's simple demand for labour is "more". Under his presidency, the posture of the NUM has been worlds removed from the dour defensive struggles of Smillie and Cook over half a century ago. Instead of a desperate fight to ward off punitive wage cuts and victimization, Gormley's sights have been set on "a good education for the children, a jaguar at the front, a Mini at the back". He has also been a couple of chairs and a lamp, and almost broke his foot kicking at things, so is now limping about.

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commendable middle-class objectives. Under his leadership, the miners' living standards have made untold and dramatic progress. The £100-a-week collier is long since a reality. Underground workers in the pits have resumed their rightful place at the top of the wages table. Health and pit safety have improved beyond all measure. Despite the controversy that has surrounded his career, down to his recent retirement, Gormley has been, along with Arthur Horner, the outstanding miners' leader in the post-war period, perhaps the most consistently successful leader of a major British trade union since Bevin. Gormley's consensus bids fair to replace that of Attlee in the moulding of later twentieth-century Britain.

To commemorate this remarkable career, an enjoyable new biography, *Battered Cherry* (the title is borrowed from the *Sunday Express* labour correspondent), has now been published. It is, in fact, of the "ghosted" variety, familiar to us from the lives of professional footballers. But it is a superior example of the genre. The attempts to convey Gormley's style and speech patterns are a bit forced at times. The adjective or adverb "bloody" becomes distinctively repetitive. Joe too often fights "like holy hell" (an interesting gloss on a Catholic upbringing). There are a shade too many Lancastrian clichés - too many ferrets and flat caps, too much brown ale and rugby league, important though these influences may have been in Gormley's private life. For all that, his rumbustious, unpunctual personality certainly comes across; the text is far less anodyne than is often the case with trade-union biographies.

The author provides a good deal of clearly marshalled information on many topics. For enthusiasts for mining techniques, there is a fascinating account of the methods of "hutching" and the precise rôle of "sylvester" and "gablocks" in the hewing of coal. On collective bargaining, the course of negotiations with the NCB and the Heath government prior to the national coal strikes of February 1972 and February 1974 is discussed in valuable detail. The background to the Wilberforce court of inquiry in 1972 is filled out in major respects. In 1974 we learn how potentially successful talks between Gormley and Whitelaw were blighted by interference from Labour Party leaders - which leads Gormley to join the throng in driving a few more nails

into the coffin of Sir Harold Wilson's reputation. The progress of the national incentive scheme for productivity in the mid-1970s is also illuminated. The book ends with a brisk demolition job on Arthur Scargill. This, then, is not only a superior form of "ghosted" biography. It is also one of the best accounts of a miners' leader yet to appear, comparable with the autobiographies of Arthur Horner or Will Paynter in the recent past. It will be warmly welcomed by historians as well as the general reader concerned with recent industrial controversies.

The moulding of Gormley's personality and outlook is a major revelation of this book. From the start, he emerges as a pugnascent "moderate", a natural diplomat with a good dig in either fist. The early pages describing the mining community at Ashton are moving and instructive. Out of that timeless working-class world of struggle and poverty, little removed from Mrs Gaskell, with its daily brutalities and appalling pit accidents, Gormley arose with rare talents and ambitions. Andy Capp and Archie Rice rolled into one. A generation earlier, in the era of the private coalowners, he might have been lost to view. In the more hopeful world of the Attlee government and of nationalization after 1947, new opportunities could open up for a thrushy young area secretary. Thereafter, Gormley's approach is always expansive and optimistic. He fights tenaciously against pit closures in the Roberts era. But for the miners left in the industry, he strikes out confidently. Joe Wip (unprecedented economic benefits. With the Heath government beaten after the Wilberforce findings in 1972, Gormley is as forceful as his Communist colleagues in plugging a further twenty fringe benefits on to the basic wage award, including the ending of the hated bonus shift, a source of contention for the miners since 1947. The 1974 strike ends with equal flourish, the NUM being given a blank cheque by Michael Foot. In passing, Gormley murmurs that these strikes may have had undesirable long-term results in teaching "the lads" to talk precipitately of strike action in any labour dispute. But such worries do not detain him for long. The president of the NUM in the seventies is a cheerful badonkad, enjoying the good life in Sunbury-on-Thames, honoured by the media (for all his occasional carping about press treatment of his convivial life-style), and revered by most of his flock.

In general this is an invigorating, even inspiring, account of an important life. Gormley emerges as more of a visionary than has often been detected. With a warm commitment to personal industrial conditions and to an idealism of an unusually internationalist flavour, Tony Benn's offer to him of the chairmanship of the NCB in 1976 was an appropriate recognition of his qualities. Like other union leaders, Gormley has his limitations and blind spots. In some ways, the effect of his career has been to reinforce the class system within our society, rather than to erode it, for all the material gains won by the miners since 1972. But it has been a creative and effective presidency by an outstanding working-class figure, nevertheless.

His dog and himself

By Victoria Glendinning

FRANCIS KING (Editor):
My Sister and Myself
The Diaries of J. R. Ackerley
217pp. Hutchinson. £8.95.
0 09 147020 X

J. R. Ackerley, born 1896, was author, dog-lover, boy-lover, poet, literary talent-spotter, editor, diarist — not necessarily in that order. He died in 1967. Although his friends, prominent among whom was E. M. Forster, were devoted to him, he seems to lack the universality or the glamour necessary to win him much more than specialists' attention in a generation that neither knew him nor felt his influence as literary editor of the *Lit* — a post he held for nearly a quarter of a century. Yet most of his books were unremarkably autobiographical, and the astonishing story of how his father kept up, in perfect secrecy, two separate marriages only a few miles apart, was revealed not only by him in *My Father and Myself* but by his half-sister Diana Petre in *The Secret Orchard of Roger Ackerley*. Now, with the publication of these diaries covering the years between 1948 and 1959, Joe Ackerley must be becoming one of the best-documented figures of his generation.

His Aislaitan bitch, Queenie, must be the best-documented dog in literature. Ackerley wrote about her in two books, as "Tulip" and as "Eve", and it is she who is the real heroine of *My Sister and Myself*, not poor Nancy. Ackerley loved Queenie more than he loved any human. "All Joe's friends, even those who were dog-lovers like myself, hated Queenie," writes Francis King in his introduction.

Well, not quite all his friends. On November 1, 1948, Ackerley recorded a visit from his East End friend Freddie, the former hardsman (the "Johnnie" of *We Think the World of You*). Freddie made the dog happy before he turned his attention to her master. "He began to tickle her tits and the liked this little vulva..." Queenie bled this, and all that followed, very much indeed; and then, "after Queenie's turn, it was mine". Is the reader who is taken aback by this very naive, or inhuman? How often must the term "dog-lover" be taken literally, as in

Freddie's case? And does it matter much anyway?

No one bothered to make Nancy happy in any way at all; that was part of the trouble. Mr King, in his selection from Ackerley's manuscript diaries — about a quarter, he says, of the whole — has concentrated on the relationship between Ackerley and his hysterical, irrational sister, three years younger: this means focusing on as well as the ubiquitous Queenie, since all three females were perpetually in rivalry for Ackerley's attention. Nancy and Queenie expressed their jealousy with tears and growls respectively; Aunt Bunny, raffish and independent, showed more reserve.

King describes Joe and Nancy in later years as living in "a ghastly caricature of the kind of marriage, devoid of sex, that is held together merely by feelings of obligation, pity and guilt." Ackerley disliked almost all women. The diaries are peppered with his animus. "Women are naturally vain and self-centred, interested only in themselves or what people think of them." As for Nancy, who lacked an occupation, he knew of no

job "that a woman so uneducated, uninterested, vain, self-centred, hypochondriac, idle-minded, irresponsible, left-handed, ignorant and untalented could hold for a week." He didn't like the working classes either (of either sex) "with their irrationalities, and superstitions, and opinionatedness, and stubbornness, and food foibles, and laziness, and selfishness..." He had, as almost any page here will demonstrate, a fine if repetitive vein of commination, and makes one or two jokes: his mother, always running out of something from the chemist, he calls "puss in Boots".

The only things he really liked were Queenie, and walking Queenie on Putney Heath or Wimbledon Common, and writing, and drinking wine with friends. Mostly he wanted to be left alone. Nancy was unable to leave him alone. The poor woman was living by herself in one room in Worthing and going slowly off her head. What she wanted was to live with Joe; but Aunt Bunny was living with Joe. So Nancy made a suicide attempt, and ended up in a mental hospital for a while. Joe was hit by remorse. Aunt Bunny nobly packed

her bags, and Nancy moved in with Joe — where she bickered and complained and failed even to mend his socks like Aunt Bunny did. She was to break down again, after the period covered by this book; but she survived her brother, and it was she who handed over to Mr King his legacy: these diaries.

It is a very sad and very dreary story that they tell. Ackerley records the endless trips up and down from Worthing to see Nancy, his rambling, inconclusive conversations and correspondence with her, rehearses her misfortunes and grievances and, with greater fluency, his own. The tone is that of someone monologuing on the top of a bus to a trapped audience: "First of all, I said, I shall be ready to take you in two or three weeks' time. Then I thought, that won't do. It only accounts for me, what about Bunny?" And so on for pages. This is garrulous writing, with no exchange value.

The book is worth reading for King's brilliant scene-setting introduction, in which he characterizes the *dramatis personae* and their habitat, Ackerley's shabby flat over a

pub looking out over the Putney towpath. King comments on the self-absorption that Joe Ackerley and Siegfried Sassoon had in common: the best writing by Ackerley in this book is a lively, ironic account of a holiday spent with Sassoon at Heytesbury Park, which is funny at the expense of both host and guest, well-observed and wonderfully corded. It is not the only worthwhile part of the book, which is laced with fine paragraphs of descriptive writing, all far removed from his neurotic preoccupation with Nancy. One cannot, however, come between the diarist and Queenie. August 8, 1956:

Upon the concrete verandah the bars of my cage are cast, by the sun as it sinks below the balustrade. How pretty the pattern they make, the bars of my cage. They lie beside me, bars of shadow, bars of brightness, on the concrete ground, they lie upon my body as I sit in my deck chair and upon the body of my dog beside me. We are within our cage together, the cage we have chosen, as happy as it is possible to be with death drawing closer.

Ant's eye view

By Charles Madge

TOM HOPKINSON:
Of This Our Time
A Journalist's Story, 1905-50
317pp. Hutchinson. £8.95.
0 09 147860 X

This engaging, sparely written, unself-indulgent account takes Tom Hopkinson through childhood, school and university and up to the peak of his professional achievement as editor of *Picture Post*. In a postscript he says he has already overrun the words allotted, and has only managed to reach the age of forty-five. One hopes he will soon bring the story up to date on his subsequent thirty and odd years.

Like all good autobiographies *Of This Our Time* succeeds in conveying the inner unity of the life through all the turmoil of action and engagement. It is soon apparent that the author is unusually reserved even for

an Englishman, but that he has succeeded in presenting a believable self in spite of this and almost because of it. When he was nine, a family friend paid tribute to the characters of his three brothers but of him would only say "Tommy's a dark horse". When he was eighteen, at family meal-times "Tom's reserve and preoccupation with his own interests cast a chill down one side of the table."

At intervals, the inner self is revealed only to be hidden again both from himself and from other people. Sent to boarding school at the age of seven, in his weekly letter home he wrote about a dream he had the night before, in which he was lying on the grass in the summertime, when a seagull, "white as only a sunlit seagull can be", sailed across the sky. "This was all but it filled me with a rapture as intense as though I had been given a momentary glimpse of heaven." But the letter was never posted — he relieved it and sent instead the usual schoolboy phrases.

There are waking visionary experiences too. Aged fourteen, alone on

the moors near Kendal, "my self seemed to melt away; viewer and the scene blended into one. Time stopped or had never existed." This particular experience, he says, has never been repeated, but there are others nearly as striking.

At eighteen he saw a pretty girl on a bus "wearing a thin printed dress with a vacant place next to her, the inhibitions of my upbringing and more easily run to the back of the bus and throw myself into the road than do what I am longing to do, take a couple of strides and drop into the empty place beside her." This is the only implicit reference to sex up to the end of Chapter Nine, which describes his job at W. S. Crawford's advertising agency, and a point a single sentence explains that the extra money his gave him was important "since by now I had a wife and two children to support".

The next chapter is headed "Marriage". He had met Antonia White

(about to publish *Frost in May*) at Crawford's. She liked parties and social life and had interesting friends, including Geoffrey Grigson, who worked on the *Morning Post* and was planning to launch a new poetry magazine. In such company, Tom often became gloomy and morose, searching his mind vainly for anything to say. Four chapters later, on the eve of the Second World War, and after he has become editor of *Picture Post*, he lets fall that he has married again, this time to a girl of Jewish family from Vienna, Geri Deutsch. Five years and nine more chapters on, when his political views were diverging from those of his proprietor Edward Hulton to a point where they had to part company, it was also evident to him that his marriage with Geri was coming to an end. They had little contact, he was immersed in his magazine; "the word 'workaholic' had not then been invented, but if it had it would have fitted me all too well".

After the final rift with Hulton in 1950, in the period of reflection that followed, he began to be haunted by the phrase "Is there a pattern in the carpet?" accompanied by the visual image of a carpeted room across which an ant, or some other small creature, was attempting to make its way. "It can see in front of it or behind, to left and right, but it cannot look up at the ceiling nor see anything more beneath itself but the floor across which it struggles. In its progress it keeps coming across patches that are smooth and others where the pile is thick and progress difficult. At times it is surprised by tufts in unexpected colours. Having now got some way across the room, the question the ant has begun to ask himself is, 'Is there a pattern in the carpet?'" Meanwhile he had met Dorothy, widow of the writer Hugh Kingsmill. "In two or three years' time Dorothy and I would settle down together and embark on a marriage which would last for the remainder of our lives."

For the most part *Shadows on the Grass* is immensely agreeable, full of good *Boy's Own* cricket and army stories, set in such places as Bangalore, Kenya and Aden, but with surprising embellishments. The cricket details are always expert, however ridiculous the drama.

But though cricket is the theme of the book, the agent of memory there is much else to admire; Cambridge in the last days of the Raj, are vividly told. There are, too, crafty vignettes of such non-cricketers as Maurice Bowra, Dudley, and L. P. Wilkinson among others, though what the more normal students of *Shadows on the Grass* could change their lives. I am only sorry the story finishes when it does, for the story after the date at which it ends in the same Fathers' Match. I'd like to see what he makes of that encounter.

As cricket books go, *Shadows on the Grass* is unique. Viewed material equally for *Gay News* and *The Cricketer*, *Granta* and whatever magazine *Picture Post* produces, there are particularly affectionate and revealing portraits as schoolboys of James Prior (Charterhouse XI, 1945), the same year as P. B. H. May, and A. N. Raven, and William Forster. Prior was later the victim of a memorable whisky-drinking party at DeJell in 1947 and on Raven's evidence would make an admirable Prime Minister.

At heart Raven remains true to his early passions. That is the charm of his engaging product of Alfred de Vigny out of Oscar Wilde, if that were possible. He writes beautifully with a proper sense of the sadness of

mouths. Luckily quite a few of the characters — E. M. Forster, J. R. Ackerley, Ronald Storrs — are dead.

Raven admits he has been unlucky in his brief encounters with famous men. Jean Cocteau, lunching with in Greece, seems only to have complained, "On ne peut pas manger correctement en Athènes." Evelyn Waugh, encountered in Heywood Hill's bookshop, simply repeated like a mechanical toy to an assistant "Isn't it hot in your shop, isn't it hot in your shop," and Patrick White, at dinner in his own house in Sydney, is remembered only for rebuking an obnoxious guest "I shouldn't have asked you; I should have known better; Queens Means Scenes."

There are a lot of "scenes" in this book: scenes in Charterhouse dormitories, scenes in rooms at Cambridge, scenes in Army messes. Simon Raven loved all three institutions, yet typically managed to go too far and end up in disgrace. His attitude to his fellow cricketers in one is not unfavourably camp, though homosexual encounters took place with quite the frequency and facility suggested. Still, such adventures are the stuff of Raven's fiction and he is rarely other than genial, light-hearted and appreciative.

He starts and finishes his book with romantic prose that would not have been out of place in Blunden's *Cricketer Country*. By page eight,

Queening King Willow

By Alan Ross

SIMON RAVEN:
Shadows on the Grass
158pp. Blond and Briggs. £7.95.

"Stalns on the trousers" might have done equally well for the title of Simon Raven's cricketing memoirs, since masturbation and accounts of what he calls "the other" feature almost as large in the story as cricket. Sillily, one does not expect Mr. Raven to play studiously down the line for long and he has produced a characteristically hilarious work of fiction, masquerading as autobiography.

I say "work of fiction", since much of the book is written in dialogue and the dialogue is put into the mouths of real people. Raven has an idiosyncratic attitude to chronology, his book moving back from army life in 1957 to prep school in 1938 and then forwards again, but these faithfully reported and lengthy conversations are never less than twenty years old, more often nearer forty. Raven has never been one to spout a good story by sticking too closely to the truth and one must presume he has taken full advantage of a novelist's licence in the interests of characterization and entertainment. Nevertheless, I imagine a number of people will be surprised and not always agreeably, at the words put into their

The ferment of fashion

By Keith Thomas

LAWRENCE STONE:
The Past and the Present
274pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£8.75.
0 7100 0628 4

The most disarming feature of this book is its dedication: "To Sir Robert Birley, John Prestwich and R. H. Tawney, who first taught me what history is all about." It is now nearly twenty years since Lawrence Stone left these shores for Princeton University and there is a generation which knows him only as the leading figure of that most thriving and innovative of history departments and the director of its Shelby Cullom Davis Center, a celebrated arena for historical pugilism, where visiting historians defend their papers against aggressive attack over several long and punishing hours. Yet in singling out his public-school teacher, his Oxford tutor and another important early mentor, Professor Stone is making more than a sentimental obeisance. He is reminding us that the truly formative influences upon him are not transatlantic at all. He is a product of Charterhouse and Christ Church and a former Oxford don.

Admittedly, that was all some time ago. It is hard to believe that Mr Prestwich would have let the young Stone get away with some of the passages in this book, such as the confusion of the great Bishop Stubbs with his lesser namesake C. W. Stubbs, or the remark that K. B. McFarlane (and not Charles Plummer) invented the term "bastard feudalism". But it is essentials which matter, and the essential features of Stone's enormous achievement as a historian are his immense energy, his openness to new ideas, his rapid facility in digesting complex material and his capacity to achieve a clear and vividly written synthesis — precisely the qualities which the Oxford weekly essay is supposed to inculcate.

The book itself is made up of reprinted writings over the past two decades. There are three long surveys of current historiographical developments, plus a dozen or so long book reviews, the latter mostly taken from the *New York Review of Books*. The reviews deal with such large issues in early modern history as the Reformation, Puritanism, the

seventeenth century. They also discuss some of the topics in social history which have become very fashionable in recent years: crime, witchcraft, childhood, old age and death. They are written with characteristic pungency. Stone is a believer in adversary history. He is quick to reduce a complicated argument to a series of numbered points and equally quick to tell us what the flaws in the argument are. Like most reviewers, he cannot always resist a chance to pay off old scores: Professor G. R. S. Jones is firmly rebuked and so is Lord Dacre (another of Stone's old tutors, but not one who appears in the dedication). Stone does not mince words when he spots error: a suggestion made by one historian is "pure poppycock"; and much of what uni-versalities have taught undergraduates has "been about as useful to the student as the practice of female circumcision". Readers who have never attended a Davis Center seminar will be able to extract some of the flavour.

But Stone is always constructive in his criticisms, even though he is sometimes ready to build great edifices with bricks which are scarcely dry. He is not afraid of large-scale generalizations, and he excels at extracting implications from a writer's work which the author was too timid or too confused to see for himself. He can occasionally be careless about details, but he is consistently fertile in hypothesis. Teachers will find these old reviews full of provocative assertions, ideal for discussion, their pupils will discover in them a lively guide to much historical writing. Those who want, say, a

quick summary of Philippe Ariès's views on the history of death or of Barrington Moore's thesis about political development can begin here.

It is, however, the historiographical essays which deserve most attention. For Stone is a remarkably candid and self-conscious chronicler of his own time and his account of the current state of historical writing raises large and important issues. It falls into three parts: a chapter on "History and the Social Sciences in the Twentieth Century"; a survey of Prosopography; and an article on "The Revival of Narrative" which first appeared in *Past and Present* two years ago. (To them could have been added his survey of "Family History in the 1980s" in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 1981.) Together, they constitute a challenging (and challengeable) survey of what has been achieved by recent historians and what has gone wrong.

Stone's picture of historical writing during the past hundred and thirty years is a clear one. The story is of a false dawn, followed by a long overcast morning, then a brilliant afternoon and, after that, sunset. In the mid-nineteenth century, he argues, it seemed possible that history could be a subject with the widest possible implications. He quotes the long-forgotten inaugural lecture of H. H. Vaughan, one of Oxford's more obscure Regius Professors, who urged in 1848 that the historian's task was "a disclosure of the critical changes in the condition of society" and that his subject-matter should comprehend not just politics and administration, but also "law, customs, tastes, traditions, beliefs, convictions, maxims, pastimes and ceremonies". This Age of History, the Age of the future was rapidly clouded by the development after 1870 of academic history as an austere professional discipline, with its scope restricted to "the administrative and constitutional evolution of the nation state and the diplomatic and military relationship between those states". Social history was largely ignored and relations with the adjacent social sciences were virtually non-existent.

Then in the 1930s, with the foundation of *Annales* in France and *The Economic History Review* in England, the attack upon *l'histoire événementielle* began. At first the great stimulus was economics, frequently combined with a Marxist sociology. In England this period culminated in the great "gentry"-controversy of the 1950s, in which Stone played a leading and ultimately triumphant part. Later, in the 1960s and 1970s, demography and social anthropology became the innovating influences. They drew the attention of historians to the history of the family and to the study of popular beliefs, customs and rituals. The widening of the subject-matter of history was further stimulated by the social changes of those decades.

Radicals, women, blacks, children, the elderly: all participated in the search for a "usable past". For Stone, the past twenty-five years have been "something of a heroic phase in the evolution of historical understanding". It was a "Golden Age of Historiography", characterized by a "bubbling ferment of new ideas, new approaches and new facts". He feels "peculiarly fortunate to have lived through, and taken some part in, so exciting a transformation of my profession". (He is not quite consistent about the duration of this golden age, for he elsewhere remarks that "the last forty years" were "together with the forty years before the first World War", "the most fruitful period in the whole history of the profession". If the profession began on around 1870, this would mean that it is only thirty years or so which have been without fruit.)

In the past few years, thinks Stone, the glory has departed. Some of the millennial expectations raised by history's brief union with the social sciences have evaporated. The emetic, and algebraic formulae to

large quantities of electronically-processed data, have turned into "statistical junkies"; and their findings have been expressed in "so mathematically intelligible a form that they are unintelligible to the majority of the historical profession". Psycho-history has proved a disaster area: "a desert strewn with the wreckage of elaborate, chromium-plated vehicles which broke down soon after departure". The study of women and sexuality is "in serious danger of suffering from intellectual overkill". The relationship between history and the social sciences is "increasingly tenuous". Even the best of the "new historians have lost credit because of their consistent neglect of politics" — decision-making, war and the exercise of power.

The heroic phase is, therefore, over. As the financial cuts to the universities dry up the supply of fresh young blood, we may expect "intellectual stagnation" or, at best, a period of "quiet consolidation of received wisdom". Stone even diagnoses "the end of the attempt to produce a coherent and scientific explanation of change in the past"; "it may be that the time has come for the historian to reassess the importance of the concrete, the particular and the circumstantial." In his essay on "the revival of narrative" he emphasizes the tendency of some recent historians to move from analysis to description (albeit "thick description"); the exploration of a single event in order to illuminate a whole social system or structure of beliefs, in the manner of *Whigs and Hunters* or *The Cheese and the Worms*.

Many historians, particularly those who live in universities less sensitive to changing fashion than is Princeton, will not recognize this picture at all. For them history is proceeding in much the same way as it always has. They have not tired of quantification, for they never took it up in the first place. Neither is there any element of intellectual overkill about their study of women and sexuality. Stone's view of the subject is from that alliterative triangle, Princeton, Paris and *Past and Present*. As he concedes, the bulk of the historical profession during his "heroic age" "continued to concern itself with political history, just as it had always done". The "new" historians became the "power elite" in France and to a large extent in the USA. But Stone, the severer, never "captured the critical levers of academic power and prestige" in Oxford, Cambridge and London.

To that extent, Stone's picture of the past twenty-five years contains a strong element of autobiography. For he was raised in the Oxford history school on a diet of politics and diplomacy. He was inspired by the example of Tawney to work on the relations between economic and political change. His great work, *The*

Crisis of the Aristocracy, was originally given a red binding (the Clarendon Press's colour for economics), but its contents reflected the author's move away from economic history narrowly conceived to the study of the family and of the nobility's whole style of life. Translated to Princeton, Professor Stone enthusiastically took up quantification and, through the Davis Center, pioneered the "new" social history. In the 1970s his largest work was on *The Family, Sex and Marriage*. Now he has come to the conclusion that the scope for innovation in this area is much reduced and that we are in for a duller and less exciting period. To that extent, his book is somewhat reminiscent of one of those spiritual autobiographies written at the end of the Civil War period. In England, in which the author recounts how, brought up a godly Puritan but seeking new light, he turned first to the Presbyterians, then to the Independents, then, as the pace grew faster and the spiritual intoxication headier, to the frenzy of the Ranters and the Muggletonians, until finally, as passion subsided, he found refuge in a quiet haven of the Quakers. True to this pattern, Stone ends on an ecumenical note, stressing that in history's house there are many mansions and that "methodological diversity" and "ideological pluralism" are essential if one is to avoid "tyranny" and "narcissism".

Precisely because Stone has participated vigorously in so many of the historiographical trends of his time, there is much truth in what he says. Social history has indeed entered a second generation, whose characteristic work will be microscopic in approach, careful and exact in tone, shunning the bold theme and the large-scale generalization. This is why *Past and Present*, as James Obelkevich remarks in a shrewd appraisal of that journal in the French magazine *Le Débat* (December 1981), has become in some ways a duller and less innovative affair. In the USA social history appears to be still in full spate (hence the libel that *Past and Present* has British editors but American authors). In the UK its prospects are less good, particularly now that the Social Science Research Council has abolished its history committee altogether and put social history under the general heading of "Economic Affairs".

Meanwhile, political history, which had inevitably tended to attract those of conservative disposition during the Shelby Cullom Davis Center years when all the radicals were chasing off after social history, has entered a highly conservative phase, at least so far as the early modern period is concerned. Stone refers to "the new British school of young antiquarian empiricists" — "erudite and intelligent chroniclers of the petty event". He has in mind the new *Narrativism* of those who are busy taking the ideology out of the Civil

War and the Protestantism out of the Protestant Reformation, in an effort to reveal that each of these great events was unwanted by the mass of the population and is only to be understood in terms of the machinations of a tiny power elite: all this, ironically, at a time when the ideology is busily being put back into Namier's own eighteenth century. At Oxford many able young graduate students now wish to work on topics in Tudor political or diplomatic history of a kind which might have been devised sixty years ago by A. F. Pollard. It is as if the "heroic age" had never been.

Where then does the future lie? No doubt, with the pluralism which Stone recommends. "History" has never been a clearly defined subject of study and it is likely to continue as what he calls a "loose confederation of jealously independent topics and techniques". Yet there is one area in which the next decade may well see considerable progress. This is the exploration of the mental assumptions which underlie social behaviour. As Stone remarks, historians have long operated with a three-tier model of reality. First, and most important, came economic and demographic facts. Then the social structure. Lastly, intellectual, religious, cultural and political development. This model essentially reflected the Marxist concept of ideas as "superstructure" erected on a material base. Stone correctly observes that this economic and demographic determinism has been undermined in recent years by a recognition of culture and ideas as independent variables. What has been happening is a shift from materialism to a modified idealism, as so-called "material needs", like food or clothing, are themselves seen to be shaped by prior mental constructs: Obelkevich remarks in a shrewd appraisal of that journal in the French magazine *Le Débat* (December 1981), "A concern with cultural categories, with symbols and systems of mental classification, already being observed in many different areas of historical writing, from art history to the history of political thought. The older functionalist anthropology which inspired much historical writing in the 1960s may have little more to teach. But the newer anthropology which places its emphasis on meaning rather than function still offers a rich resource to the next generation of historians. It will be fascinating to see how the Shelby Cullom Davis Center responds to this latest intellectual challenge."

A *Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature, 1635-1789*, Volume 1: A-F (477pp. Johns Hopkins University Press. £11.75, 0 8018 1995 4) is the latest volume in the series *Studies in Maryland History and Culture*.

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The mission of Barebone's

By Blair Worden

AUSTIN WOOLRYCH:
Commonwealth to Protectorate
466pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £22.50.
0 19 822659 4

Commonwealth to Protectorate is the story of a year: 1653, perhaps the most improbable and the most dramatic twelve months in English political history. In January the Rump of the Long Parliament, the sole constitutional link with the opposition to Charles I in the 1640s, was clinging to power despite mounting criticism from the New Model Army, whose officers were pressing for a speedy reform of religion and the law. On April 20, the Rump was theatrically dissolved by Oliver Cromwell's musketeers. What would the army put in its place? As in January 1649, when they had executed the King and then wondered how to replace him, the officers did not know. After weeks of struggle within the army council, there was summoned the hand-picked assembly of saints which is known to history as Barebone's Parliament. When it met on July 4, Cromwell believed that the years of Egyptian bondage might at last be over, and the new Jerusalem in sight: "this may be the door to usher in things that God hath promised and prophesied to us. . . . Indeed, I do think something is at the door, we are at the threshold." Barebone's, sharing Cromwell's exalted opinion of its mission, announced in its opening declaration that

many, if not all the people of God in all the world, are in a more than usual expectation of some great and strange changes coming on the world, which we believe can hardly be paralleled with any times but those for a while before the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And we do not yet know that any records of all the nations in the world (we scarce except the Jews themselves) can afford such a series of divine providences, or more clear impression of the goings forth and actings of God in any people, than hath been in these nations.

Four years later, reflecting ruefully on the political calamity which had ensued, Cromwell took a less sanguine view of Barebone's: it was "a story of my own weakness and folly." The "naked truth" was that the issue was not answerable to the "issue" and simplicity of the design. Yet the army, the second half of 1653 had indeed proved a period of stark political education. If the officers had wearied of the Rump's dilatoriness and conservatism, they soon became frightened by the rapidity and the extent of change under Barebone's, which threatened to abolish tithes and Chancery and appeared to call the rights of property into question. In December the musketeers were again called in to clear the chamber. This time, a group of officers led by John Lambert was ready with an alternative, the Instrument of Government, which made Cromwell Protector and abandoned the principle of parliamentary sovereignty. Cromwell clutched at the new constitution as might a drowning man at a raft. A dismal, almost futile conspiracy of installation was hatched through: "The Commonwealth well over, the Protectorate had begun."

Austin Woolrych's horizons are not confined by the events of 1653. His opening section looks back to September 1651, when the defeat of Charles II at Worcester had enabled the New Model officers to concentrate on political reconstruction. His concluding chapters look ahead to 1653-8, the years of Cromwell's sovereignty, which he sees (rightly, in my view) as a period of more constructive government than has recently been allowed. But his principal concern is Barebone's. Why was it called? What sort of men sat in it? Was its failure inevitable, or the product of conflicts which might have gone another way? Professor Woolrych answers these questions with impeccable scholarship, and with a

width of sympathy which rescues well-meaning and legitimately perplexed MPs from centuries of heartless parody. His meticulous study of the assembly's membership removes "the double stigma of sectarianism and trade": "at least four-fifths of the members were recognised as members of the gentry class by their unbiased contemporaries"; and although the Fifth Monarchists, with whose principles Barebone's has often been associated, did much to discredit the assembly, they commanded only a small following within it. The legislative preoccupations of Barebone's (one of which resulted in the introduction of civil marriage) are shown to have been more often practical than fanciful.

But Woolrych has no wish to hide the assembly's limitations. Barebone's had no roots in the political nation and was "unhappily cocooned from the feelings and pressures of the regions." Its leaders were politically inexperienced; ablest members were its youngest. Chilly rhetoric, which might inflame disguised divisions, inflamed them once ideas had to be converted into programmes. Barebone's was dissolved, in the end, because the alternatives seemed to be bloodshed and anarchy.

The Cromwellian propaganda which rapidly discredited the dispersed parliament has helped to obscure from posterity the hopes which Cromwell held of it. In Barebone's he sought to create a forum of the godly party, that broad and invisible political church which to his dismay had been fractured by Pride's Purge and which in so far as the officers would let him, he strove to re-create throughout the last decade of his life. By energetic legislation and by sobriety of discourse, the godly party would set national reformation in motion. A reformed society, guided by a puritanized nobility and gentry, would be a stable society. Stability would create parliamentary elections which Cromwell always wished to hold but for which his countrymen never seemed quite ready; Lord made me electoral chaste; but not yet.

To Cromwell, the godly party was to be found across a wide spectrum of background and belief. He had no time for constitutional or theological rigidity. He was exasperated by men of fixed posture, whether they were Republicans, Royalists, Presbyterians or Fifth Monarchists. Hence the flexibility of his constitutional expedients, and hence the oratoric course of his interregnum politics. Yet Cromwell's inconsistencies of political behaviour displayed consistent religious and social policies, which he sought to implement through such various constitutional machinery. He wanted from Barebone's what he had wanted from the Rump, and what he wanted from the Protectorate: propagation of the gospel, reform of the ministry, religious toleration, limited and practical amendments to the legal system. His supporters urged on Barebone's the schemes they had urged on the Rump: the Hale Commission's report on law reform, and (in slightly revised shape) John Owen's plans for the improvement of the clergy. The Rump gave Cromwell too little reform: Barebone's gave him too much. In the Protectorate, he sought a balance. Woolrych's decision to look backward and forward beyond 1653, while it makes for a long book and deprives him of a clear focus, valuably reminds us of the continuity of reforming purpose which lies beneath the broken surface of interregnum politics.

Commonwealth to Protectorate is an important and authoritative study most frequently consulted by students of the interregnum. It is, in an easy book to read. Working from "mature and often partisan sources, Woolrych has frequently, and the names of tellers - not the most nutritive of evidence. At every turn he has brought to his subject more patience and more precision

than his predecessors, whose arguments he challenges or modifies with disarming fairness and courtesy; but the non-specialist reader may sometimes wonder whether the issues of contention merit the space accorded them. In his techniques and in his organization Woolrych seems to have been much influenced by two remarkable books, Gerald Aylmer's *The State's Servants* and (still more) David Underdown's *Pride's Purge*, which may not have been ideal models for his own rather different subject. Like Aylmer and Underdown, Woolrych has provided not only an important story but an indispensable work of biographical reference. The price of that double achievement is a more leisurely pace than the material will always bear.

Still, one would sooner have too much of Woolrych's prose than too little. He would never advance an unclear sentence (so that one regrets all the more that Oxford University Press, whose printing standards appear to decline as the quality of its history list improves, should once again have produced a book riddled with misprints). His discussions of the issues which divided Barebone's are lucidly and accurately, and which bring light where earlier accounts

Fit for a new king

By K. H. D. Haley

LOIS G. SCHWOERER:
The Declaration of Rights, 1689
391pp. Johns Hopkins University Press. £18.50.
0 8018 2430 3

A week, we are constantly reminded, is a long time in politics, and if the Bill of Rights incorporating the Declaration was indeed England's "greatest constitutional document since Magna Carta", as David Ogg said it, then there is ample justification for a book focused on the critical fortnight of debates in January and February, 1689.

It was an unusually complex and interesting situation. Though the Whigs later claimed the credit for the Glorious Revolution, Tories as well had welcomed the intervention of parliament and of range to secure a free Bill of Rights. Some had even appeared in arms for William; and the reversal of James's policies was not easily reconciled with the loyalty to the Stuart cause and the religious faith on which they had prided themselves in the reign of Charles II. Fortunately for Britain, James had fled the country; but the question what regime could take its place, keep James out and still satisfy Tory principles, was a difficult one.

Moreover, as Lois G. Schworer says, in December 1688 "there was not an entire absence of partisan identification", and all party men had fresh in their minds the argument of the Exclusion Crisis less than a decade earlier. Many Whigs were only too prone to say, in effect, "I told you so." It had been found "by experience", said Colonel Bligh, "to be inconsistent with the safety and welfare of the Protestant kingdom, to be governed by a Popish prince" - words which the author rather oddly says met the requirements of Tories, who were in fact wrong, and that only a new form of exclusion bill would meet the case. Among the Tories, there were cross-currents; but some, in line with the preference for "limitations" on the powers of a Popish successor, the Charles II had professed to accept in 1681, wanted a claim of rights as an alternative to exclusion pure and simple; they lost interest when it became clear that in practice there was no alternative to a change of

have brought heat. If there is a substantial criticism to be made of Woolrych's interpretation, it is one that could equally fairly be directed at all of us who have written about the parliamentary history of the interregnum. The criticism concerns the limited vocabulary with which we try to recapture the political behaviour of a distant age.

Woolrych announces early on that if the book "has a unifying theme, it is the continuing tension between radical millenarian Puritanism and moderate constitutionalism." Soon we are re-introduced to the familiar "categorisation" of puritan MPs as "moderates" and "radicals". Woolrych recognizes that the distinction has "shortcomings", because it is too neat. Perhaps it is open to the more profound objection that it restricts our imagination. How much can we learn about a man who lived three centuries ago from the description of him as a "mild moderate", a "mild radical", "a very radical", "a radical but not an extremist", a "possible 'essentially a moderate' moderate", "a 'moderate' radical", "a 'moderate' moderate", "a 'moderate' moderate" or "of a more moderate hue" (and so on)? Differences within the radical ranks seem to be largely a matter of emotional temperature, the radicals being "fiery" or "militant". The language in which Woolrych distin-

guishes shades of opinion in Barebone's is almost exactly that in which it has recently been customary to describe the quarrels in the Labour Party.

That language is not necessarily inaccurate, even if members of Barebone's might have been puzzled by it. But is it adequate? No doubt there is a sense in which political groupings follow repeated patterns throughout the ages, and in which only the issues change. But it is not a very interesting sense. Woolrych's study is not "high politics" of the old school. It has the sociological dimension which has been the principal contribution of the past half-century to the writing of political history. The dimension which the book lacks is in the history of ideas and in the history of the people of Israel not merely a metaphor for their own travels but a divinely and historically ordained parallel to them? How could political events come to be influenced by the belief that England should be governed by a Jewish sanhedrin, or its legal system modelled on the Jewish code? Woolrych, whose dispassionate account is so excellent in other ways, does not pursue such questions very far. But then, which chronicler of puritan politics has?

these, or the slips which are present, such as the spelling of the name of the famous painter as "Reubens", or the references (more than once) to William "signing [sic] the Bill of Rights into law"; they matter much less than the carefully detailed account of the actual debates. But one may doubt whether the view of the Declaration itself is as novel as it is here claimed to be. The theory is that the Declaration changed not only the person of the king, but the kingship itself, by which "the royal powers; we are even told again that the ceremony in which the document was offered to William represented 'the pre-eminence of Parliament in England's mixed government'. The idea that the Revolution achieved this is scarcely new, and as the author rightly contends, the change was not merely a "palace revolution". The Whigs drafting the Declaration no doubt aimed at restricting the royal powers but the question remains how effective the statement of rights was in achieving this, with as much as possible uncontroversial, ambiguous or harmless in terms of William's immediate needs.

Perhaps the flight of James II and the war situation which lasted until 1697 did more for the liberties which Whigs had claimed than did the list here compiled. But one thing the Declaration did do, clearly and effectively. The frontispiece shows it being offered to William and Mary, already in the Banqueting Hall, sitting under a canopy of state as though they were already monarchs, and William's speech in reply avoided regarding the claim of rights as a condition of the transfer. But whatever the significance of the famous words, "abdication" and "vacancy" in the paper, the fact remained that James II was excluded, and that by the authority of the Convention new rulers were established by something more than the merely formal ratification of a medieval form of dynasty, in order to carry out policies more acceptable to the political nation; and it was this that the former Exclusionists cheered.

Milton Studies XV, edited by James D. Simmons (255pp. University of Pittsburgh Press. 0 8229 3449 3), contains twelve articles including Robert Thomas Fallon's "Milton's Epics and the Spanish War", John Dixon Hunt's "Milton and the Making of the English Landscape Garden", and Lana Cable's "Coupling Logic and Milton's Doctrine of Divorce".

It would be unkind to put too much weight on such matters as

Spilling the Elizabethan beans

By Valentine Cunningham

ROBERT NYE:
The Voyage of the Destiny
367pp. Hamish Hamilton. £8.50.
0 241 10742 3

Robert Nye's hottest line is doing up, or doing over, old literary properties. With boisterous skill he has refurbished the myths of Falstaff, Merlin and Faust, as now he turns his rumpling hand to the reputation of Sir Walter Raleigh. Lover, husband, father, voyager, and royal puppet, famous intemperate of prince and warrior, prisoner, poet, and historian of the world, Raleigh offers an ending mixture of writer and man of action. What we know of his life combines bloodletting, sauciness and penmanship much too handsily for a novelist of Robert Nye's predilections to pass up.

The Voyage of the Destiny gives us the log of Raleigh's final voyage - the one he was released from the Tower for his last no-hope hunt for gold in Spanish Guiana. Which is gripping enough. The journal is also, though, an apology for his life that Raleigh intends for his son Carew, the inside story of Raleigh's risings and fallings in Royal esteem. And this is more gripping still. Knowing he has a strong Rabelaisian reputation to keep up, Nye pulls out all his plain-speaking, lip-smacking, bawdy stops. His Raleigh is keen to debunk himself and all the others. No stone and no stomach will be left unturned. Myths and reputations must all go. "My son, I am no giant (and God knows) no god". Actually, Raleigh owns he disliked the sea. He even disliked Queen Elizabeth. He wonders whether he loves his wife, whether he's a coward, whether he knowingly sacrificed his older son Walter to the Spanish pikemen.

The city of London? It stinks. The sweet Thames is in fact an unsavoury running latrine. Elizabeth sported "cheesy layers of underwear". She had "chess" between her toes". As for King James's toes, he liked nothing better than padding them in the entrails of stags he'd just killed. Well, perhaps he enjoyed a bit more being taken by his calamite Villiers, just as he was, all bloody in the hunting field. Other great men spouse nastiness no less eagerly than their monarch. The big arrangements, the Cecils and the Howards, did

for poor Kit Marlowe, stabbed to death through the eyes. They and their like will do for Raleigh. In James's final coup against him Raleigh smells Bacon. At least Which is more than can be said for some of James's foul-breathed sweet-sarries, or even pub-crawling Ben Jonson.

And so, gossipily, rumbustiously, on and on. Raleigh's prose is grimly underlined by any talk whatsoever: turds and pricks, gallows and pox, the messy slaughterings of Irish Spaniards, the direct racking of poets, it slurs them all up with relish. If there's blood between Raleigh's fingers as he writes, and on occasion there is, he'll say so outright. Sometimes, but only sometimes, a curious lapse in this customary outspokenness occurs: for example, when Raleigh gets around to telling what went on in Elizabeth's privy chambers. We never quite learn what exactly happened there, but this indiscreet discretion is doubtless meant to be titillating.

Happily, there's more to Nye and

Raleigh than mere ribaldry, for all the ribaldry's attractiveness. Raleigh is much given to pious reflections about fathers and sons, and to less pious ones about the function of father substitutes in his story - his own tutorship of James's son Henry, drunken Jonson's relationship with Raleigh's own son Wat, the catamites who call James "Dad". Ironies especially around the strife on European scene: Spain against England, Catholic against Protestant, Christian coven against Christian coven. And Raleigh's consciousness of his story's family meanings is matched by the keen self-awareness of his writing as writing. Alert to current trends in the novel - he is after all one of the most regular of Raleigh's deftest of *nouveaux romanciers*.

It's a pointedly anachronistic role - at one moment Raleigh's pen even sprawls across the page in proleptic sympathy with Sterne's Uncle Toby's expressive gesture of narrative despair - but for all that, an

intriguing one. The poet Raleigh is shown continually worrying about his style and his method. He inhabits a consciously literary world. He's full of the doings and writings of Shakespeare and Seneca, Gascoigne and Harrington. He acts out given literary roles. Is he the Prince of Denmark, he wonders? Literariness pervades and characterizes his life. His renowned play with the cloak was, he thinks, a poem. His only deed against the Armada was composing an "Armada", as he calls it, of a narrating sentence about the battle.

His goal of El Dorado was a fiction: he invented it out of other men's preceding fictions. The bits of his own life and death he is not writing himself are written out by James, the master of cruel pantomimes. Raleigh's own story ends as he ends a poem about ending up (Time "shuts up" the story of our lives) and as he reflects on the actor Ayleen playing out the end of Marlowe's Faustus. Raleigh lived by writing, was survived by his son's narration of his wordy execution, and now

he lives again in his own and Nye's memorializing text.

Clever stuff. Not, however, in the end, clever enough, perhaps. Irksomely, *The Voyage of the Destiny* doesn't quite hang together. Even its sprightly rollicking and niftiest ruses don't always help it over the lumpiness and bluntness of its narrative proceedings. Like Raleigh on the scaffold, it can be afflicted by severe bouts of long-windedness. And its bid for ultimate high seriousness is dragged down not just by its eager touch for the sordid and low. The "third Voyage" that the novel seeks to narrate - the one that's somehow beyond and different from the Guiana trip and the journey of Raleigh's life, in other words the mystical quest for Raleigh's "for man's destiny" - is not only "difficult" for Raleigh to "define", it remains hard for the reader to grasp. And as Raleigh and Nye keep reaching and fumbling together for this ultimate meaning, they just miss giving one the satisfying sense that this novel is at last really getting the grip it wants on the mystery of Walter Raleigh.

Growth potential

By Lindsay Duguid

DEBORAH MOGGACH:
Hot Water Man
252pp. Cape. £6.95.
0 224 01994 5

According to the publishers, *Hot Water Man* "can hardly fail to remind" its readers of *A Passage to India*, and it is true that the more perceptive among them will probably spot the fact that Deborah Moggach's heroine is reading a copy of Forster's novel as she battles with the hot season. It is making a somewhat larger claim to suggest that Moggach's book resembles Forster's (it is most like the short stories of Ruth Prawer Jhabvala in its toughness and humour), and it is in the end both kinder and more useful to ignore the literary echoes and to concentrate on the story in hand.

Hot Water Man is set in 1975 when Donald and Christine Manley take up residence in Karachi, where Donald's firm Cameron Chemicals (now manufacturing the Pill, where it has formerly marketed patent medicines and shirt stiffener) is estab-

lished. Living in a house in the European compound, K12 Housing Society, and waited on by the silent-footed Mohammed, Christine longs to make contact with the "real city" while Donald is obsessed with the stories of the Raj told to him by his grandfather who served in India. Their rocky marriage (which has not developed far from its beginnings in Crouch End) and Christine's inability to conceive are not helped by their failure to come to terms with modern Pakistan. Christine's notions of Women's Rights and liberal politics lead her to frequent the dubious quarters of the city and to mock the local British Wives' Association, while Donald searches for remnants of his grandfather's time; neither can accept the reality of present-day Karachi. Shamime, the modern, westernized niece of a local minister, sums up these perplexities:

Shamime laughed. 'Where's the shop?' 'In a little passage where they sell antiques,' said Christine. 'At week-ends they have stalls. It's rather like your bazaars actually. You know, lots of people, no cars, covered arcade, too, like in Karachi. Rather fun.' 'Sounds just like Camden Passage.'

The disappointments of these characters are neatly aligned. At the end of the book Shamime enters into an arranged marriage, having learnt that Western ideas of romantic love are not what she has been led to believe. Duke flees to the careful puritanism of the United States, having learnt that energy is no match for the williness of the East. Donald, having learnt that his grandfather sired a child on an Indian girl and then abandoned her, perceives that his dreams of the Raj were inaccurate as well as anachronistic. Christine triumphantly gives birth, having renounced her charts and thermo-

meters in favour of a visit to a local fertility shrine. That all is not what it seems is the small message which emerges.

Deborah Moggach relies too much on a rather novelistic kind of coincidence to neaten her plots and sub-plots. Some elements - Christine's naivety, Shamime's upper-class English schooling - are exaggerated in order to fit in with the overall theme of prejudice. Mohammed's role is (in strongly accented prose) a great country, this Pakistan. Leastways it can be great. You have the possibilities, you have great growth potential.

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Pilgrims in the temple of art

By Rosemary Jackson

MARINA WARNER:
The Skating Party
180pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £6.95.
0 297 78113 8

Marina Warner's real skill and interest seem to lie less with storytelling than with iconography, which creates problems for a novel like *The Skating Party*, where narrative is all-important. Her researches into the "representations" of the Madonna were published in *Alice in the Virgin Sea: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (1976), and the fascination with painting and oriental culture evident throughout her previous writing is still present here, in a reluctance to move away from the visual image. The main female protagonist is a clever, idealized mother figure - ever-beautiful, attractive, understanding, loving - but the Madonna into a convincing, full-blooded character never quite succeeds.

Inside the novel's temporal scheme, the "Madonna" has her face the difficulty of competition, but Viola calls on her son, Timmo, to do

the lighting for her. The closeness of their bond, "the oldest bond of the flesh", drives Timmo to avenge Viola's hurt at her husband's sexual infidelities, and the result is yet another rehearsal of the drama of Oedipus and his mother, enacted by stereotyped characters. The father-husband is Michael, a complacent academic-historian having an affair with anorexic-looking, doting student Katy. A banal melodrama of entangled mother-and-son, father-and-daughter relations reaches its climax when Timmo sleeps with Daddy's mistress before symbolically blinding him by removing his glasses, the parents expel both kids from the house, Viola's domestic peace is re-established and the Madonna reigns supreme.

Yet Marina Warner has a very fine sense of form which, paradoxically, makes these crude manipulations of plot doubly unfortunate. The initial section of the novel is a beautifully sustained sequence, with precise lyrical depictions of icebound landscapes, as if one of Breughel's paintings of a snow scene had been slowly animated. The beauty of these makes the degeneration into dreadful bedroom (and bathroom)-bound scenes more disappointing, especially since they unintentionally farcical quality lacks any hint of self-parody. One of the innumerable after-dinner dialogues runs: (Timmo) "I haven't any-

thing interesting to say." (Viola) "Do you think any of us have?"

The Skating Party is neatly structured around flashbacks which give depth and perspective to the characters' present confusion. These insets focus mainly on two episodes: Michael's early historical research into the ceremonial rites of Palau natives, particularly the sacrifice of a young girl, who is starved to death and who, when Timmo sleeps with Daddy's mistress before symbolically blinding him by removing his glasses, the parents expel both kids from the house, Viola's domestic peace is re-established and the Madonna reigns supreme.

Given a sure control of tone, *The Skating Party* might have read as a self-critical, even self-parodying satire on aestheticism. For there is a recurrent unease at having pushed out certain unpalatable elements from the picture frame. Unaesthetic issues such as "starvation", "the Bomb", "racism", "the Pill", and "sexual morality" are introduced only through alluded and uncomfortable dialogue, while attempts to reproduce teenage casualness or punkish conversation about sub-cultures and pop music are about as embarrassing as Dickens's depiction of the working class.

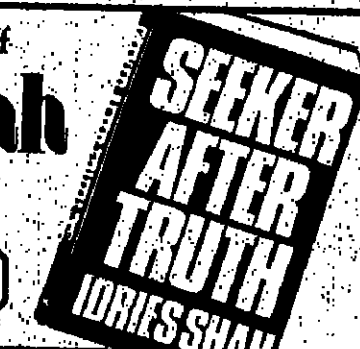
In a *Dark Wood*, Marina Warner's first novel, half suggested that literature was a "political act", and Viola voices a guilty awareness that looking on at suffering is not enough.

She talks to Michael of "their culpable non-participation. Blood is shed, she thought, and we are the pilgrims in the temple of art who never smell its smell." Michael silences her potentially passionate concern by insisting that "Spells are binding only on the consenting" - a sentence which is also the last of the novel. One can only hope that Marina Warner will gradually break the spell of her own artifice and do more justice to her literary and imaginative skills. The admirable fluency and eloquence of her prose would be better employed in the service of a fiction which is more engaging than this pictorial display of indifferent passion broken only by minor outbursts of consummate melodrama.

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With an eye on the weather

By Martin Gilbert

H. G. NICHOLAS (Editor):
Washington Despatches 1941-1945
Weekly Political Reports from the
British Embassy
With an introduction by Isaiah Berlin
700pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£20.
0 297 77920 6

The publication of documents "in the raw" has recently become an addiction of publishers and editors. There are times when the content of such documents is so thin, or their perspective so partisan, as to serve either no purpose at all, or to act as a distorting mirror in which the history of our times is mis-seen and mis-reflected. This volume is proof, however, that documents as such can serve to enhance our knowledge, and to give a new and valuable perspective of important events which too clever or too intricate a historical analysis may obscure, or miss altogether.

Isaiah Berlin's Washington despatches have long been a subject of historical speculation. Winston Churchill is said to have been an avid reader of them. The despatches themselves were rumoured to have been witty, caustic and indiscreet. In fact, as shown here, they are precise, informative and restrained. Although written amid the pressures and uncertainties of war, they read as easily and as enticingly as any of the more publicly prepared efforts of the Master. For the dominant hand here is indeed Berlin's, even though these despatches were sometimes modified, pruned or added to by other Embassy officials, or in Berlin's absence written in their entirety by others, before being sent on from Washington to London, where, it was assumed, their secrecy would be preserved at least until they came within the scope of the then fifty-year rule, in 1995.

The first of the published despatches was written three days after Pearl Harbor, and reports a fascinating fragment that historians have overlooked, that in the days before the Japanese attack which brought America into the war a number of isolationist newspapers, in their attempt to discredit the Administration, had reported "evidence" of an alleged American Government plan for a United States Expeditionary Force of five million men to launch an offensive against Germany in 1943. "The existence of such a plan," Berlin writes, "was not denied by the Administration," which went so far, indeed, through the Secretary of War, to publish an attack on the loyalty and patriotism of those who published information of value to the country's enemies.

As one reads these pages, a different picture emerges of Churchill's wartime influence. He has recently been portrayed on television and in the more skillfully polemical histories. Instead of the vindictive ego of recent portrayals, one has contemporary evidence of the extent of the beneficial influence of Churchill's personality upon even the hardest-fisted critics of British policy. Describing an important off-the-record talk by Churchill at a press luncheon in Washington on September 14, 1943, Berlin reports, on how the Prime Minister, "with a sparkle with magnificent gusto and candour, captured the minds and hearts of his important and professionally sceptical audience to a degree which, according to some of them, was without parallel." Walter Lippmann had told Berlin of the "irresistible impact and life-giving properties" of Churchill's visit, in contrast to the "stifling atmosphere of Washington intrigue and gossip" while Raymond Gram Swing, a leading news commentator, added that Churchill's "breadth of vision and generous attitude towards France and Russia, his freedom from petty resentments, and the thrilling effect of his all-embracing and infectious imagination were indeed marks of a very great man."

Yet even Churchill could not stifle, except perhaps momentarily,

the tides of anti-British sentiment which were so frequently the subject of Berlin's reports, and in a despatch written less than two months after the Prime Minister's genuinely successful press conference, Berlin notes that one cause of a recently reported recurrence of anti-British feeling was the shift of national attention away from the war, to post-war problems, first and foremost of which was already (in November 1943) the prospect of Anglo-American economic rivalry once the war was won.

The theme of anti-British feeling can be traced from start to finish of these despatches, with an interesting early reflection by Berlin himself, in May 1942, that the strengthening of such hostile sentiment after Pearl Harbor "is partly due to the fact that whereas it was difficult to criticize Britain while the United Kingdom was being bombed, such criticism no longer carries the stigma of isolationist or pro-Nazi sympathies." Individual proponents of anti-British feeling included those two formidable and clear-headed Luce ("returned from the Far East choc-a-bloc with anti-British feelings"), and a general impression in Washington that the British were "too concerned to preserve this bargaining power after the war as well as their prestige as a first-class power." As late as December 1944, Berlin notes that what he calls "indignation" against Britain has given way "to a kind of disgruntled and disenchanted cynicism which says that it was foolish ever to have supposed that the European, and particularly the Russian and British, towards, could really have been expected to change their spots."

Such an argument, Berlin adds, "naturally feeds the isolationist tendencies of the wavering and depresses our friends," particularly as of Montgomery's alleged "passivity" came not from Britain's traditional enemies, "but from our disillusioned friends."

The extent of anti-British feeling is only one of the many themes on which Berlin reports in these despatches. Others presented by the editor, with judicious and wide-ranging eye, include American relations with the Soviet Union, the Polish imbroglio, the Zionist dimension in American politics and, as a corollary, the considerable influence also of non-Zionist Jews, the political struggle of Roosevelt and his administration, and the attitude of the American press to every facet of war policy. In this context it is curious to note that on the eve of the British

Hitting the trail

By Esmond Wright

ELIZABETH DREW:
Portrait of an Election
The 1980 Presidential Campaign
459pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£10.95.
0 7100 9021 8

In a series of fortnightly pieces written between November 1979 and November 1980, Elizabeth Drew for the *New Yorker*, and her co-trail of an Election, stand up surprisingly well to a retrospective examination, recalling brilliantly the atmosphere and the uncertainties of the twelve-month campaign. They appear here as fourteen chapters, usually built around one or other of the major candidates, and usually each of them in turn. Until the end of the primaries, in June, Miss Drew abstains from overall assessments, and the book's strength is essentially its skill in capturing the mood of the moment.

As such, we have here a vivid series of almost camera-like portraits of the key participants. Seen now, however, in retrospect the book gives rise to conclusions that were

General Election of 1945 (pace the *Daily Mirror's* later headline "Whose Finger On the Trigger?", the *Times Herald* represents Mr Churchill in a singularly disagreeable cartoon as inviting a frightened and reluctant Uncle Sam to enter the Third World War", while when the results of the General Election were known, Churchill's defeat "was received with a shock of astonishment that was almost reminiscent of the reactions to the Pearl Harbor bombings").

The reader of this volume will be impressed by the variety of these topics and the freshness of their presentation. To achieve this effect, the editor, H. G. Nicholas, has had an unenviable task. First he had to locate as many of these despatches as possible, hidden as they were amid some 20,000 wartime files at the Public Record Office in Kew, with no guide as to where they might be found. Then, after he had located some 600,000 words in bulk, he had to reduce it by a half to fit a 700-page book. This reduction, involving the inevitable loss of so much interesting material, has been done with considerable skill, although some scholars may regret the editor's decision to leave out altogether the actual reference numbers to the individual despatches which he did eventually use. Lack of a reference number will prevent these despatches from being read in their entirety, or the comments on them, or the use made of them, except by those who are prepared to trouble the editor himself with queries, to set about new the difficult task which he has so triumphantly completed.

In the fifty pages of short biographical sketches at the end of this volume, Professor Nicholas has produced an appendix of considerable help, although there are still quite a number of political references in the text which might usefully have been explained, for the guidance of readers who are not necessarily experts in the intricacies of wartime politics, by additional footnotes on the page.

There is one other unfortunate gap, which struck this reviewer somewhat forcibly, but which may well be inevitable. In his lucid introduction, Berlin refers to his first despatch from the United States, in the late summer of 1940, when the reports being sent to America by American press correspondents in Britain seemed to indicate, after the fall of France, "a degree of depression and even defeatism in Britain which was not warranted by the facts", some of which, as Berlin recalls, "seemed to be having a del-



Franklin D. Roosevelt in conversation with a neighbour at Hyde Park station, November 1930: reproduced from FDR: The Life and Times of Franklin D. Roosevelt by Joseph Alsop (256pp. Thames and Hudson. £10.50. 0 500 01267 9), which will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue.

terious effect on the public opinion of a country of whose goodwill and material aid we stood in desperate need." His first Washington task was to analyse these destructive reports. He did so, providing, it is clear, an analysis which was not only important in itself, but which also made Berlin's own reputation as an analyst, and led after a break to his subsequent work in Washington. Unfortunately, this doubly important despatch is not printed here. Perhaps it has not yet been found amid the myriad files at Kew. Perhaps it has been "weeded". We are not told which. Despite these essentially minor caveats, the book itself must be recognized as of considerable importance. Berlin's skill at catching the

shifts, changes and nuances of American public opinion in every facet of domestic and foreign policy is remarkable, and is done of course without the benefit of hindsight. As a result, this volume will become an essential historical source, offering both the general reader, the student and the scholar an elegantly produced, carefully edited, and highly readable testimony to one man's mastery of the written word. It is not surprising that when the war was over, Churchill sought Berlin's guidance on several aspects of his war memoirs, and that several decades of Oxford undergraduates (including the present reviewer) found the flashes of mental energy a source both of enlightenment, and of fun.

Senator has survived in public life at all. In this re-telling, President Carter appears to have been remarkably effective, and Mr Reagan remarkably ineffective, in self-projection. Maybe it was the actor in him, but Mr Reagan manages to convey throughout the book a note that is fresh, simple and consistent, even if in the early phases he is not presented sympathetically.

Not the least valuable part of the book is a 100-page appendix, giving us for the first time in print the memos to both party leaders that came to them from Richard Wirthlin, Reagan's pollster, and from Patrick Caddell, Carter's pollster. They are frank and fascinating, and reveal how little is left to chance in engineering a volatile electorate. Iran at the end, and Miss Drew appears to minimize its effect throughout the year. It is difficult to know what anyone could have done about it, but it obviously hurt the man in the White House. A reading of the book, however, suggests that even had there been no hostages, Carter would not have won, since it was inflation and economic questions that were dominant in people's minds. And on these, as on so much else, Carter's sincerity and decency were just not enough. It was not the election of 1980 that led to the aberration in American politics, but that of 1976.

From the manifest to the therapeutic

By Donald Davie

ADRIAN STOKES:
With All the Views
Collected poems.
Edited by Peter Robinson
183pp. Manchester: Carcanet. £8.95.
0 85635 334 5

Some fifty years ago, when Ezra Pound in *The Criterion* applauded Adrian Stokes's *The Quattro Cento*, he exclaimed: "It is almost incomprehensible that any man can have as great a concern for the shapes and meanings of stone beauty as Stokes has, without its forcing him to take the tools in his hands. In fact one can only suppose that he in some way regards himself as the fore-runner of some sort of sculptural amelioration, or at any rate is trying to clear up incomprehensions and to distinguish between pure and mixed sculptural values." The comment is endearingly characteristic of Pound, who could never make a distinction, nor endorse one made by someone else, without at once doing something about it, taking the tools in his hands. But the reflection is a natural one, all the same: if Stokes wasn't himself going to sculpt (as he wasn't), and if he didn't want principally to clean up messy notions about sculpture (as it soon appeared that he didn't), then what was his concern in *The Quattro Cento* (1932), *Stones of Rimini* (1934), and *Colour and Form* (1937)?

It was only incidentally the concern of a judicious historian, distinguishing in a given period the positive or healthful tendency from others that were dubious. And it was not the concern of a critic, if by "critic" we understand someone who discriminates among pleasures so as to sharpen them for himself and others. Although these splendid books did have that effect – and many of us are profoundly grateful for being thus educated by them – that seems not to have been Stokes's motive for writing them. Before long we were to see that he approached his subject not as artist, not as historian, not as critic, but as clinician – and in a strikingly narrow sense.

In the first years after he learned from Melanie Klein to relate his art studies to infantile behaviour, construing his initial distinction between carving and moulding into allegedly analogous binary oppositions (rough one inside and outside), his monographs continued to interest, though less compellingly, those of us whose interest was therapeutic. But it didn't last; for my part, I was soon throwing his books aside with a disappointed yawn. One reason for this was Stokes's prose-style, which had always been what Pound called it: "horrid." (Paterine and yet, as Pound saw, not serving Pater's ends.) Once the prose could not be

checked against particular art-works illustrated or visited, its "wastiness" became tedious. Moreover, whereas one had begun by believing that Melanie Klein's kind of Freudianism need not be reductive, one came to see that it was as reductive as any other kind, when applied to art-works. Even when Stokes's hands artifacts were being explained by being explained away. Predictably, his discourse became interesting to aestheticians and philosophers in proportion as it became boring to artists and artists' publics.

In 1968, when he had only four years to live, Stokes took the tools in his hands. He began writing poems. Since he had plainly been reading poetry and thinking about it for many years before that – he appears to have been one of the very few who read Pound's first *Cantos*, before 1926 – it's natural to suppose that he had been a "closet" or "bottom-drawer" poet while still a young man. But if so, Peter Robinson, the editor of these *Collected Poems*, has found no evidence of it. And on the whole it's charitable to assume that Stokes did indeed start writing verse from scratch, very late in life. For the sad truth is that these 180 poems are almost without exception exasperating and unrewarding. Why should that surprise us? In what other art would one expect to produce interesting work after no apprenticeship, and no practice? And Paterine prose doesn't promise well for verse in any case. The late I. A. Richards is the instance that springs to mind of such a late start on verse; and Richards's poems, though he seems to have worked at them very hard, seldom rise above the level of verbal contraptions. Certainly Stokes's don't. The best short-hand description is "Empsonian" – but that is flagrantly unfair to Sir William Empson, who has consistently demanded in theory, and often enough achieved in practice, just that musical *continuo*, as we follow sentences over line-endings, which in Stokes is conspicuous by its absence. Stokes had no ear; and his punctuation – sparse and inconsistent, his syntax therefore mostly indeterminate – suggests that he was quite unaware of any need for musicality.

When Brunelleschi introduced a "musical" consciousness into architecture, Stokes was disgusted; but poetry is a sequacious art, as music is and as architecture isn't. These poems are obviously the writings of a very intelligent man; they are strenuous, they are compact – and they are dead, they lie on the page altogether inert. Probably the best is the first of two entitled "At Night", where in the last lines the epithets are well-chosen and satisfying:

I turn inward to the quality of sleep
Safe in amicable and coaxing parts
Unbroken pledges that will promise peace.

At the graveside

By Patricia Craig

THOMAS MCCARTHY:
The Sorrow Garden
64pp. Anvil Press. £3.25.
0 85646 082 6

Thomas McCarthy's second collection is dominated by images of gravity and melancholy: snow, death, grey rain-water, "places / Where the dead had grown: the sorrow-garden". The excellent title poem is lament for the poet's father, whose grave needs to be continually filled, the soil collapsing inward, stands for "irreversible loss". Against this, we find moments of personal poetry (as in "A Wedding by the Sea") picturesque recollections, and scenes from the past. Ireland's past, occasionally, as well as the author's, is imaginatively reconstructed.

The book begins with "The Poet

This ends a poem that, like the early prose one is so grateful for, attempts to articulate the precise quality of sensuous experience: in this case, auditory: the sound of sub-urban electric trains at night. But the sensuous experience is not sharpened, so as to be delighted in; it is enlisted in the service of some sort of model or diagram:

These passing links of sound change to an upright thread
Soar in joints and spokes that square the firmament
As if many heterogeneous towns could make a theme . . .

Here the model constructed – something to do with human solidarity conceived of as discontinuous inter-linkings – is at all events consoling, "amiable". But this is exceptional. And indeed just this is what is most disheartening – how little comfort Stokes finds. For Pound in *extremis*, in *The Plan Cantos*, was stayed and comforted time and again by just what the young Stokes, a colleague purveyed – a well-kept, a colleague of worked marble, some emblem out of Renaissance Rimini or Venice or Urbino, figurative or not, in either case magnificently enhanced by what Stokes first perceived and named as stone-bloom or stone-blossom (lichens and weathering and the soft attrition of human hands), the artifact splendidly expressive but not self-expressive, all outward, all – Stokes's own word – manifest. And yet it turns out that when Stokes was in *extremis* (there are eighteen poems here from when he knew himself under death-sentence from cancer), such emblems comforted him not at all, nor did he turn to them so that they should.

What had happened to him, that he did not have recourse to the consolations he had himself provided?

By rage inspired

By Bedwyr Lewis Jones

ROBERT WILLIAMS PARRY:
Cardi
Edited and with an Introduction by
Sir Thomas Parry
136pp. Newton, Powys: Gregynog.
£11.2.

Almost fifty years ago, in the halcyon days of private printing presses in Britain, the Gregynog Press invited Robert Williams Parry to submit a selection of his poems for publication. The press had already brought out a fine collection of T. Gwynn Jones. It was only natural that it should wish to add Gwynn Jones's peer among Welsh poets to its list of

Something had turned the finest consciousness of his generation into a theorist with a following. What were the pressures, personal and domestic and societal, that compelled that crucial shift from art as "showing" to art as "therapy"? The question is not rhetorical; there was or is a schizophrenic daughter, to whom is addressed a poem that is, as a human document, extremely moving. All the same, what a pity that Stokes should have so markedly turned back to specifically human nature, away from that larger "nature" which Pound reminded him of when, reviewing *Stones of Rimini*, he remarked: "Stokes' 'water' concept is, whether he remember it or no, – in harmony with the source of all gods, Neptune, in Gamisto's theology." Never mind who Gamisto was. What, in Stokes's conditioning or his temperament, turned him back from the elemental energies that his own attention had uncovered – predominantly water, and stone, and the one folded within the other – to drearily calculable variations on the infant's experience of breast-feeding? Why the turn back in, never outward?

Mr Robinson does not address this question, does not seem aware of it. But the discoveries that Stokes had made in the Rimini *Tempio* – discoveries not in the first place scholarly, but unearthed simply by a finely tuned sensibility – could be glossed either psychologically, or metaphysically. When, and how, and why did Stokes decide that the psychological gloss automatically had priority? England made him, one inclines to believe that the blame lies with the age, and the milieu.

In 1973, a few months after Stokes's death, a collection of his poems appeared in *Penguin Modern Poets 23*, along with collections by

Welsh authors but Parry accepted the invitation and then withdrew. Thus it was inevitable that when the Gregynog Press was recently resurrected, this time through institutional and public rather than private munificence, Parry's poems should be its first major Welsh language item.

The new *Cardi* is a very different product from the aborted 1933 project. Eric Goe, the present printer, is more expansive in page size and layout than was his predecessor Robert Ashwin Maynard; his typesface is 14 point Monotype Baskerville. The content is also markedly different. A volume of pre-1933 Parry would have been a partial and one-sided presentation of a major poet. It would have resembled a selection of Yeats before the Easter Rising; for the Welsh author, too, experienced a revolutionary change in his middle years.

Williams Parry established his reputation with the sonnets which he wrote during his exile in an army camp at Winchester; sonnets which are sonorous and majestic, full of longing and melancholic doubt. He consolidated it in the 1920s with a series of lyrics which capture the pristine loveliness of the outdoor scene in images which are cleansing and fresh but which are at the same time charged with a chilling awareness of transience and decay. Then came the change.

A misunderstanding about his lectureship convinced Parry that the university in which he was employed was flippant in its attitude towards literature, and especially towards the Welsh language. In protest he embarked on a one-man strike. He vowed not to publish either poetry or criticism any more. The Gregynog volume was withdrawn. The poet's dissatisfaction continued to burn and when in 1936 his comrade Saunders Lewis was dismissed by the same university for leading the first direct action in modern times on behalf of a Welsh political cause, Parry's anger burst. A spate of poems flowed. In-

Geoffrey Grigson and Edwin Muir. These poems have been reprinted by Robinson who has, however, working from the manuscripts, allowed himself liberties beyond the usual norms of editorial propriety. For instance it seems that poems which Stokes had unequivocally cancelled in the manuscripts are none the less salvaged into print. Since the poems are not much good anyway, this hardly matters very much. Still, Stokes was a distinguished individual, and if this unsatisfactory side of his activities was to be recorded, it should have been done properly – with some regard for the author's intentions, so far as these can be determined from what was obviously a very disorderly set of manuscripts. The sad truth is that we have not read far into this book before we have lost confidence that on any page of it we are reading what Stokes would have wanted us to read.

Robinson opines that poetry is "a form which, when articulated fully, is more conceptually substantial than prose." A resounding declaration; but what does "conceptually substantial" mean? And as for "articulated fully", the English of Stokes's verse is, as I have remarked, articulated very sparsely indeed, and very approximately. Robinson's prose is similarly rough-and-ready; and he shares with his poet a lordly disregard for the niceties and indeed the necessities of English evidence and syntax. Moreover either he or his publisher has skimped proof-reading so that of twenty-five famous words quoted from Mallarmé's *Crise de Vers* no less than four are wrong. It is not really surprising that when Robinson offers, bravely enough, to explain a Stokes poem, "Weathering", what he puts before us is rather outrageous special pleading.

The "terrible" poems of the poet's winter of discontent as well as the early sonnets and lyrics are almost all included in this new limited edition, selected and arranged by his cousin, Sir Thomas Parry. The editor has been justifiably harsh on the poet's pre-1917 and post-1941 work and on his occasional pieces. He has been too harsh on the elegiac quatrains; these have in them the quality and concentration of Greek epigram. One misses the 1929 lyric "Summer". But then the volume is meant to satisfy by its presentation rather than by its choice. And it succeeds.

Six wood engravings by Peter Reddish add to its appeal. These tone in well with Parry's early nature poems. One, in particular, showing two curlews flying upward over mountains, moorland, a full of atmosphere. But I am not altogether happy about the positioning of the illustrations. They have been used by the editor as dividers between groupings of poems rather than integrated into a unified composition. It is the one blemish on a finely produced book.

The volume is a fitting accolade to a major poet, Williams Parry himself, could he see it, would be pleased and more than a little bemused. The resurrected Gregynog Press is now owned by the same University of Wales that once caused his withdrawal and stirred his rage.

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commentary

Victorian Pantheon

By Bruce Boucher

The Cast Courts
Victoria and Albert Museum

"The boldness of the idea, the height of the apartments, the magnitude of many objects... and the beauty of others, all concur to produce a lasting effect." Thus *The Builder* greeted the opening of the Cast Courts of the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1873. Considering the chequered history of the rooms and their contents over the past century, the reopening of the West Court is an equally remarkable event.

The guiding spirits behind the Museum of Manufactures, the early title of the V & A, were in no doubt as to the utility of casts to improve contemporary standards of design. Consequently, they took great pains in amalgamating, purchasing, and commissioning copies of objects as diverse as Trajan's Column, the tomb of St Sebastian in Nuremberg, and the Pórtico de La Gloria from Santiago de Compostela. Yet, in a matter of fifty years, the Courts changed from a repository of all that was best in European art, to a depository of white elephants. Travel photography, and the Modern Movement effected a sea-change in public taste, and it was only with great difficulty that the then director, Sir Eric Maclagen, managed to save the casts and electotypes from dispersal in 1928.

Fortunately, the Cast Courts have survived their opponents and decades of neglect to re-emerge as a triumphant example of high Victorian taste. Anthony Radcliffe and his staff in the Museum's Department of Sculpture have conducted a sympathetic restoration of the West Court, bringing back its maroon and verdian colours, and assemblage of casts, much as they would have looked in 1873. But the value of the restoration goes far beyond that. The destruction of other collections has enhanced the value of the V & A's casts while the vicissitudes of time have destroyed many originals which can now only be fully appreciated in copies. Thus, it is still possible to admire the twelfth-century tympanum of Shobdon Church or the lost relief of Christ and the apostles from Lübeck in the mid-nineteenth-century copies of the West Court.

The documentary value of the V & A's casts is unquestionable, but the Cast Courts are probably even more significant for the insight they give into the Victorian mentality. Entering those lofty rooms is like stepping into a Victorian Pantheon of design and technology. No one could fail to be impressed by the full-scale replica of the Pórtico de La

Gloria or the Rosslyn Chapel, nor can one forget the part that works like these or the St. Sebaldus tomb played in the development of Victorian ornamentation. The juxtaposition of objects from Spain and Scandinavia, from Italy and Germany, often seems bizarre, but the placement of bronze doors from Pisa and Hildesheim or fountains from Winchester and East Meon encourages a comparative study of design.

The display of casts is also complemented by a small sampling of nineteenth-century fakes by the legendary Bastianini and others. One can only hope that more of them will be put on display and that the second Cast Court will reopen in the near future.



"Cattle at a Drinking Place in the Campagna", 1854, by George Heming Mason, ARA, (1818-72). Mason was born in Fenton Park in the Tones, a member of the Mason's pottery family; he was brought up at Welles Rocks in rural North Staffordshire, and left England to seek his fortune in Italy. There he met Frederick (later Lord) Leighton and Giovanni Costa, who were to become close friends. On his return to England in 1857, he produced many idyllic interpretations of the Staffordshire and Derbyshire countryside. His influential patrons included the Duke of Westminster and Lord Leighton, but he died too soon to build on the popularity of his large painting, "The Harvest Moon" (Tate Gallery). His "Girls Dancing: A Pastoral Symphony" figured in the Arts Council Exhibition "Great Victorian Pictures" in 1978. About fifty of Mason's paintings, together with related and biographical material, are brought together in the first major exhibition of his work for a century. It opens at the City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent (May 1-June 12) and then tours to the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (June 26-July 31) and the Fine Art Society Ltd, London (August 9-September 4).

From spouting to solipsism

By David Nokes

The Marvellous Boy
Bristol New Vic

Thomas Chatterton was the Romantic movement's lost leader. Wordsworth's tribute to "the marvellous boy, the sleepless soul that perished in his pride" is by no means the only, or most extravagant, of the homages paid by later Romantics to this first martyr in their cause. "The purest English," declared Keats, "is Chatterton's." His lowly birth, his solitude, his obsession with Gothic romance and his suicide made him a hero of the new sensibility. His sleepless soul received its apotheosis in Wallis's famous picture, "The Death of Chatterton," which has been the production of the Bristol New Vic since they received images of Chatterton from a different and specifically local perspective. Chatterton was born and grew up in Bristol. His father taught in the church of St. Mary Redcliffe, where the poet later claimed to discover the ancient manuscript of the Rowley poems. Bristol in the 1700s was a large, bustling commercial centre, very different from Nether Stowey or Glastonbury. Chatterton's first poems were urban satires in the vein of Pope and Gay. Fletcher introduced him at the "Spouters Club," the haunt of idle pretences and would-be wits, railing at the "servile avaricious trade" of his native city. "Spouting" takes up much of the first half of the play. Fletcher has worked hard to create an idiom for these glib ex-

Shadows and whispers

By Frances Spalding

Prunella Clough: New Paintings
1979-82
Warwick Arts Trust

Prunella Clough once dealt with man-holes, crates, cable drums and swarf, producing tough, sinewy images of the industrial landscape. Three decades on, her spare, elegant abstracts register a less immediate and more cerebral response to an urban wasteland. They allude to stained or peeling walls, packed streets or tangled wire. One series, with rare explicitness, focuses on a

discarded industrial glove found in a factory yard. Instead of actual labour and mechanistic clutter, she now relies on traces and fragments that hint at past activity.

In her early canvases the factory workers and lorry drivers are locked into position with their machinery. Some of these, compact and terse in design, can be found in a back room at the Warwick Arts Trust. But where they catch attention with their harsh forcefulness, the recent paintings filling the gallery hold the mind in a different way: they are deliberately more spacious and yield a more contemplative terrain. Clough explores the infinite space that a flat canvas can suggest by use of textured grounds, some mottled and flecked

like silk or fur, others suggesting transparent curtains. Within this indeterminate space hover sharp accents - a tangle of lines or a note of strong colour. Others cling to the edge of the canvas, stretching the eye across its width and height. In one of the "Mesh" series, loose calligraphic marks unfold like pliant, chant across the filmy ground. The line saunters with a nonchalance that disguises the artist's keen sense of interval.

Clough's "Gate" series instances the more conceptual stance of her recent work. Photographs of factory gates taken by the artist as "approximate aids" are reproduced in the catalogue. Perhaps only the central cross bar will be used in the actual painting where it is combined with diagrammatic lines, reminding us of entrances indicated on a ground plan. By combining knowledge and perception, she can suggest in "Small Gate Painting VIII" both barrier and movement through.

The catalogue (28pp, £1.75) contains a valuable interview between the artist and Bryan Robertson. In this Clough admits to the raw discrepancy between the rawness of her original experience and her neatly tailored paintings; the reduction of an overloaded urban context to a cracked arabesque and hint of rust. One suspects that at some point in the 1960s her preoccupation with her subject became merely a peg on which to hang her overriding interest in art. In the catalogue she recalls the exhilaration and difficulties presented by the first sight of a Donald Judd or Sol Lewitt, because minimalist art, with its paradoxical absence of art content, broke with the rules that her painting upholds. But if the conceptual richness of minimalist depends on an understanding of its convoluted theory, Clough's abstracts can be appreciated on their visual strength alone. They may play a familiar game but they achieve a tough elegance.

Their process is one of detachment and control, qualities at odds with her interest in urban chaos. When recently she decided to reintroduce the figure in her "Subway" series, it was not in any substantial form but as a transient shadow or reflection on the tiled walls. Some of these shadows create silver shapes like empty speech balloons, reducing the human presence to a ghostly whisper. (The exhibition continues until May 14 and is complemented by a show of Prunella Clough's drawings at the New Art Centre, Sloane Street.)

LTP: Journal of Literature Teaching Politics, discussed by Robert Hewson in "Behind the lines" (April 16), may be obtained from LTP, c/o Andrew Belsey, Dept of Philosophy, University College, Cardiff CF1.

changes which is not only authentically period, but might also capture the literary pretensions of a group of self-educated West country hotheads. Yet the actors never quite convince us of the personalities behind the play-acting, and the dialogue only really succeeds in its colourful volleys of invective ("Go and swive swine"), and its parodies of

lonely, narcissistic youth whose only literary prospects are as a composer of epigrams in Shepton Mallet. His closest contacts are all among the dead; his future lies in the past. He withdraws in disgust from the world of men, not in satiric detachment, but into spiritual solipsism, and eventually suicide. The only fully developed character in the play is not Chatterton, but his widowed mother, Barrie. She is a warm, vital woman of lust and puddings. Where Chatterton is pale and morbid, she is ruddy and plump. Bristol gossip, which he despises, is to her "life's gravy." A basket of clothes to her is a thesaurus of human histories; a wedding-dress is a mnemonic for a tragic tale as simple, sensuous and passionate as the *Iliad*. It is she, not her necrophiliac son, who has both the wit and the humanity to sympathise.

John Fletcher weaves an interesting selection of Chatterton's works into his play, and attempts to recreate the medieval forgeries with a structure of pastiches within pastiches. Yet the deliberate clashing of styles doesn't quite work. The transitions from instantaneous cameras to medieval dumb-shows are often awkward, and the play doesn't altogether escape the trap of the dramatized anthology. Fletcher's intention seems to be to say something about our distorted image of the Romantic poet. For it is not Chatterton, making his Faustian compact with a fictitious Faust, but his mother, who fulfils making the common incidents of life interesting by tracing in them the primary laws of our nature.

Fletcher's Chatterton is not a tragic hero, but a friendless masochist who lies for hours on the cold flagstones of St. Mary Redcliffe, letting the colours from the stained glass windows play over him. Though he broods, Byronically, in his black cloak, he more gleefully resembles Peacock's satiric portrait of Scythrop Clowry than any of the real Romantics. He is played by Daniel Hill as a

commentary

Our essential humanity

By Wilfrid Mellers

Agrippina
Sadlers Wells

Time was, not all that long ago, when baroque opera was considered unperformable in our modern world, for reasons that are not entirely invalid. For the point of Heroic Opera was to glorify Man in the Highest: to claim that we are gods (or possibly monsters), subject only to the limitations of human fallibility and mortality. The limitations are, of course, crucial: god-pretending, we none the less commit petty peccadilloes and less crimes; and, alas, we grow old and die. In the twentieth century, however, it's often seemed that we're aware only of our human limitations; fear dominates us, and we've lost pride in our humanity. We can't walk, let alone dance and sing, like kings and queens; this is a severe liability in attempting to perform baroque operas.

But if we're heirs to a greyly industrialized democracy we're also, nowadays, in strong reaction against it: which may be one reason why over the past decade baroque opera has become a fashionable cult. We still can't take it quite straight: though we respond to its extravagant passions, its pretentiousness may provoke the uneasy giggle. *Agrippina*, however, presented to a crowded house at Sadlers Wells by Kent Opera, lends itself to acceptable compromise, for three reasons. First, it is by Handel, a composer of genius who, like most geniuses, seldom keeps to the rules, so that all his heroic operas and oratorios contain, within their apparent acceptance of public conventions, private recognitions of "other modes of experience that may be possible". Secondly, the central character is a woman, motivated by female instinct rather than by male will. And thirdly the piece itself, a product of Handel's early years in Italy, is not a fully fledged

opera seria, but something of a hybrid, harking back to the court entertainments of the seventeenth century, as practised by Monteverdi and Cavalli. What were to become the traditional heroic themes coexist, in *Agrippina*, with social comedy, even satire; and when the baroque world laughs at itself, we are to some degree excused from embarrassment.

There remains, however, the tricky question as to how much the heroic world laughed at itself, and in what ways. The evidence of Handel's music doesn't suggest to me that the Emperor Claudius was meant to be presented, as he is in this production, merely as a pompous buffoon. His first aria, in which he declares his love for Poppea, is grandly heart-rending in its magnificence, and I cannot believe that the undulating cello obbligato, swelling (and subsiding) in desire, should also be used to provoke demeaning pratfalls. Admittedly, the aria is soon followed by ironic reversals: which are none the less compatible with human dignity. Handel's humane point is surely that our contradictory nature is our essential humanity. At one level Claudius pretence to divinity is to be taken seriously; the part was written for a celebrated bass with an immense range, and shouldn't strike us as primarily comic but rather as at once noble and pathetic - glorious and vainglorious. David Thomas makes a fair showing at this when the production lets him; too often, however, the producers take the easy way out, giving the conventions we can't believe in. Taking the mickey out of a *da capo* by making the bystanders register boredom or exasperation may work once, but not twice or thrice. Even in an opera as ambiguously heroic as this, the basic conventions express assumptions about human behaviour which we have to accept if the work is to convince not merely on its own terms, but on ours also. The present may find in the past what it needs; but it is likely to find only dust and ashes if it doesn't start from a decent respect.

This dubiety of intention com-

municates itself to the musical performance. It works best with the women who, unlike the men in baroque opera, happily don't need to be emasculated and dehumanized in order to assert their heroic dominance. Agrippina, as Handel presents her, is a whale of a part, being simultaneously matriarchal virago, serpentine schemer and luxurious lover; the contradictions here form a war and wool of human flesh and blood, which Felicity Palmer brilliantly encompasses. Meryl Drower as Poppea is also live on the mark, combining the open-eyed seductiveness of a Marilyn Monroe with sharp-edged vivacity. We can see as well as hear why everyone falls for her, until she is enmeshed in political chicanery about which she knows little and cares less. Her impeccably controlled coloratura catches this precisely; she whirls through her arabesques with a cherubic triumph that thinly covers nervous apprehension. Cynthia Buchan as the adolescent Nero veers too far, like David Thomas's Claudius, towards caricature; her note of peevish asperity is sometimes on target but grows tiresome through over-exploitation. The minor characters, notably Narciso and Pallante, are deftly etched by Christopher Robson and Glyn Davenport, and in their case there is no doubt that Handel glosses their corrupt cynicism satirically. The one unequivocally "good" character, Ottone, provides a moral yardstick by which to adjudicate between human fallibilities. Unjustly accused of treachery, he's a tragic victim and is given, in his diatribe, the opera's only accompanying aria. In this Paul Esswood uses his noble voice nobly, with his habitual command of line and nuance.

Perhaps, in the context of this production, he sounds a bit too dignified. In any case the counter-tenor voice may not be appropriate for the part, which Handel wrote not for a castrato but a woman. In this fact lurk ambiguities aplenty: it's as though Handel were saying that a godly good man ought to be larger

than life and free of the contagion of the flesh, yet couldn't bring himself to achieve this the hard way. So he compromises on a woman simulating a man; obviously different (and higher) in range and sonority, yet more palpably human than a trumpet-like castrato. Beautifully though Esswood sings, a woman's earthier timbre might make Ottone's dismay more tellingly immediate.

Ultimately the deficiencies of this production centre in the orchestral pit, where dubiety of intention is both fundamental and overt. The band, under Ivor Fischer, makes an agreeably tart sonority, but is painfully lacking in rhythmic stability and momentum. That basic tempi tend to be too sprightly in fast numbers, too sluggish in slow ones, wouldn't matter if there were an underlying pulse; what vitiates all is the conductor's meanderingly unsteady rubato. I've an uneasy suspicion that this is done deliberately, in the interests of Authenticity: it is supposed to reveal that Handel's characters, far from being the stereotypes they used to be dismissed as, are human creatures activated by the vagaries of real passions, here and now. In effect it does the opposite. All music, and baroque music most of all, makes sense through pulse and rhythm: which condition melodic shape and harmonic progression as well as the pace of movement itself. Handel's people are indeed profoundly human: their humanity is incarnate in the way they live, breathe, talk and walk. To deprive them of their inner momentum and equilibrium is to underwrite them from their essential being. We see again that dignity and irony may be compatible, and in Handel must be. Both the conductor and the producers might take a hint from Roger Butler's beautiful set, which effects ironic marvels of emotional metaphor by the tiniest touch - such as the mini-fountain that turns ceremonial court into gallant garden; a *hortus conclusus* wherein not only a good man as scapegoat but even the craftiest courtier might glimpse the possibility of redemption.

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A great inventor

By Paul Driver

Stravinsky
LWT

I have rarely known three hours pass so quickly as when watching Tony Palmer's television film on this century's most famous, most intimately familiar and most, singly important creator. Palmer's approach is respectful and conservative, adhering

strongly to a chronological unfolding, taking no risk in the way of personal interpretation, and presenting an estimably well-balanced and rounded portrait. A degree of success is guaranteed by use of a Stravinskian voice-over - partly authentic and obtained from archive sources, partly the clever simulation of George Pravda, reading from the various "conversation" books - which in its witty, eloquent, glassily definitive manner casts an irresistible narrative spell. It provides the sort of solid centre one usually hankers for in the more fantastical documentaries on great artists; although a lingering criticism of Palmer's film is that it is too well-behaved - in the necessary absence of any direct address from Stravinsky, seeing its subject from too epitaph-like a distance, consequently lacking depth.

But the three parts - early life in St Petersburg, fame in Paris, legend-darers and domestic bliss in California - are continuously vivid enough: Stravinsky's oddity, accomplishment, worldliness and glamour are there before you; the allegory of his life, the lucky people, places and events of it, shine out; the familiar story bears much re-telling.

It begins with the cradling of the ice on the River Neva, Stravinsky's earliest memory, though not before he has asserted his credo, "I am an inventor of music." An observation, complemented in the last moments of the neatly constructed film by the still more striking, "I am at ease in the difficulties of composing." I can say as an anecdote that we are somebody who is waiting, all my life." The St Petersburg scene, like the filming of Sorochnitsy Fair, give a valuable

modern view of what is for us impossibly historical: the latter-day "peasants" at the Fair, for instance, are wearing anoraks and leather jackets - but it is all the more affecting when the camera cuts to the sharp-edged splendour of Stravinsky's fair evoked in a performance of *Peruchka*. We see the Mariinsky Theatre, where Stravinsky's father was principal bass and where the very young composer once glimpsed Tchaikovsky, soon to kill himself. The theatre was near the parental apartment; Stravinsky had the run of the place. "It was all very convenient," he comments; and of how much in his subsequent life would that be true.

The most useful insight in this part of the film comes from a few glimpses at Stravinsky's father's renowned personal library, impeccably stacked, and his impeccably calligraphed diary, in which Igor's natal date and an enormous number of other facts of his life are, it is likely explanation of the composer's own clinical need for personal order and faithful love of objects, gadgets and musical calligraphy - all of which is fascinatingly revealed later on in a tour of his Hollywood work-room guided by Craft. There one learns that Stravinsky, whose precision of ear is one of the wonders of music, was inordinately attached to an "out-of-tune, miserable little piano" for composing purposes. Earlier we had been shown the 8 foot by 8 foot "closet" in Clarens where, with non-stop activity in 1911, he composed *The Rite of Spring* on a similar muted instrument.

Stravinsky revisited this room, and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, where the scandal of the *Rite's* pre-

mière took place, for CBS in 1965: the footage affords a sensitive way of dealing with the subject. Alongside Stravinsky's charismatic, always surprising appearances, the film sets an illustrious procession of witnesses. We gather much from Tatiana Rimsky-Korsakov, Kyra Nijinsky, Madame Danilova (prima ballerina of Les Ballets Russes, who admits, "I never realized I was making history"). Nicholas Nabokov, who also appears with the composer in a marvellous, tipsy, Russianizing show for television cameramen; above all from Stravinsky's three surviving children, speaking publicly for the first time, with a rather sad family history to relate. Stravinsky's widow Vera, ageing in Manhattan, supplies an end-piece of considerable pathos.

The range of musical illustration is commendably wide; if the works of the 1930s and 1950s are thinly represented, Palmer by no means fights shy of the difficult later serial compositions. Some of the filmed performances and stagings are particularly good - John Shirley Quirk in *Oedipus Rex* and *Abraham and Isaac*; two versions of *Les Noces*. It is not a film for specialists and a deal of interesting material has doubtless therefore been omitted still, one might have been allowed more of Stravinsky in rehearsal. There is nothing to challenge established views of the man or his work. But there are strong, simple images. Stravinsky tersely remarking after a searing account by Kyung-Wan Chung, of part of the "Violin Concerto" that "music can express nothing." And, through it all, that crazy, Olympian smile, transmission of Stravinsky's orp, magnificent delight in himself, the world and music.

HITCHCOCK

THE MURDEROUS GAZE

William Rothman

Hitchcock's subject is violence - as he looks his villain back at the camera and at us - and its ramifications stretch beyond the popular tag of Hitchcock as "Master of Suspense" to the larger mysteries of murder and love. In this fascinating and challenging book, William Rothman offers a close analysis of Hitchcock's films and documents his enlargements. The films examined are *The Lodger* (1928), *Murder! Psycho* (1960), *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1935), *The Lady on the Train* (1944), and *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956).

Rothman's insights sharpen our perception of Hitchcock's genius, his mastery of suspense, and his ability to make us see a Hitchcock film in a new way. Published March 1982.

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remainders

By Eric Korn

This month's revelations concern the virtually unimportant figure of Opal Stanley Whiteley, who published nature prose-poems of bulbous-wrenching archness: "The lily is a yellow lily and it floats upon the water. It does float upon the water like a little sky-star. Maybe it was a little one that did have longings to cuddle in among the raindrops that do come together in the pond." She appeared in 1919 in the offices of the *Atlantic Monthly*, and sufficiently impressed or imposed on Elfrigg Sedgwick that he gave her an office in which, over the course of the next few months, she laboriously reassembled thousands of torn up scraps of paper, allegedly a diary kept by her at the age of five or six in the woods of Oregon, and ripped up by a jealous sister - or foster-sister, for Opal believed herself to be a founding of mysterious origin. No one, it seemed, was more surprised than Opal when a list of French bird-names taught her by her real, her "angel-father" was observed to spell out "Robert François Philippe Ferdinand D'Orléans". Opal's book was published, achieved brief success in America and in England (where it was powered by a preface by Viscount Grey of Falloden) and she began giving herself, in an agreeably unassuming manner, the airs of a Princess and a Pretender. This annoyed the families of Orléans and Oregon in equal measure. E. S. Bradburne, in *Opal Whiteley, The Unsolved Mystery* (1962) reserves judgement, but is sufficiently sceptical for the TLS reviewer of the day to head his paragraph "Psychopathy?"

What I have here is a copy of *The Fairland Around Us* (Los Angeles 1918), the book which Opal published at her own expense - there was a story of brutal ill-treatment by the printers - and brought to Elfrigg Sedgwick, who found it too much even for him. One's sympathies are with the printers, for it is lavishly extra-illustrated with large numbers of colour plates snipped from various encyclopaedias of natural history, and captioned boldly in Indian ink. Some of the illustrations are backed with prints of Opal's own smudgy photographs with captions like "Giving the pledge of friendship to tree fairies." They are all fairies to Opal Whiteley, pig fairies, toad fairies and stinkhorn mushroom fairies. The book is bound in a green suede with the texture of damp loam, and contains on the last leaf an "Announcement of books by same author to be published at later date". There are a dozen items, including *Twilight and then Night, Raindrop's Journey, Aurelius Evangel in Search of the Joyous Blue and Wayside Fairies*.

Exhibit B is more pathetic. It is a copy of W. H. Hudson's *Book of a Naturalist*, presented to Opal Whiteley by Pamela Glenconner, Viscountess Grey of Falloden. The annotations - odd, nonrandom underlinings, a chapter where the word "pines" has been written in the margin a dozen times - suggest some kind of obsessional mania. The letters of the words of Pamela Glenconner's inscription have been counted, assigned values, added and read. All too easily can one see this child of fantasy compiling in adolescence the diary of the lost princess she wanted to be and herself, perhaps, tearing it into scraps. Yet there is independent evidence, of unknown value, that she did keep a diary as a child. And perhaps the heirs of lost kingdoms walk incognito among us.

You've probably had enough of what Hollinshead calls "images of sore and terrible countenances, all armed in curious works of argentine", so you won't mind if I go on about Thomas Hall's treatise against long hair, and the commendatory verse signed "A.M." My little Marvell turned out to be something less than a nine days' wonder, exciting a whirlwind of indifference. I am still waiting for the definitive dismissive missive, doubtless this very moment being penned in some distant academic library: "I have thought that the Hall canard was so long ago exposed. Is Mr Korn really unfamiliar with the most convincing refutation of his attribution in *Skrifter från den Kongliga Haarkundshistoriska Institut in Söder?*" I am obliged by Mr Lehmann's kind words but not convinced that a posthumous portrait of Marvell, published in 1681, showing him with long hair, proves that he might not have written an epigram (epigrammatists are not on oath) in a different sense, at another place, at another age, under another régime. The Restoration was also a half-

restorer. Or as a recent correspondent suggests, Marvell's hair in 1681 may have been wiggish.

Or Whiggish. On the precise meaning of which at the turn of the eighteenth century depends another hotly debated issue, the precise date of the first recorded of the drinking songs with which the men of Brasenose College, Oxford (and doubtless the women too) launch their annual mardigras-like, before settling down to the rigorous business of supping themselves into a stupor. See *Brasenose Ale. A collection of Verses annually presented on Shrove Tuesday by the Butler of Brasenose College*. (Privately Printed, Boston, Lincolnshire 1878): Then in true English Liqueur, my masters, begin

Six go-downs upon rep. to our true English King, In this orthodox health let each man keep his station For a Whig will conform upon such an occasion.

The editor, while sticking to the date of 1705 or thereabouts does point out that there wasn't anyone around at the time you could call both English and a King, and puts the whole thing down to Jacobitism. But the exiles of the 1680s, who opposed the Duke of York, were also Whigs. The other words present no difficulty. "Rep" is a kind of corded fabric, or else a worthless fiddle, while a "go-down" is of course (sometimes subterranean) storerooms in Indian and other parts of Eastern Asia. More interesting is the second recorded ale-chanty:

O may my verse be strong and clear To spread his glory wider Not windy like to bottled beer Or gripe-compelling cyder Lines you would hardly recognize as coming from the sobersided pen of Reginald Heber, but the icy mountains, "The only brews that Heber cares for", they used to jest, "are he-breus".

I would have offered a bottle of audit ale for anyone knowing that, but my last challenge gleaned but a single response. I asked for rhyming titles and authors, along the lines of *The Ill-Made Knight*, by T. H. White, *The Wandering Jew*, by Eugene Sue, *The Sorrows of Werther* (Goethe) and, obscure, *Marin Agate* by Mrs John Lane, *There's Rosemary, There's Rue*, by Lady Fortescue, *The Flame and the Rose*, by Helena

Grose, and - my favourite of all for its air of deadpan inevitability - *How to Examine the Chest* by Samuel West (Late Physician to the City of London Hospital for Diseases of the Chest, Victoria Park). My sole reply offered, quite admirably, *Spleen* by Matthew Green; and then with an increasing defiance of propriety, *King Lear* by William Shakespeare, *Aphra Behn's Poetical Remains, Collected Poems* by Oliver Wendell Holmes and, outrageously, *Wars I have Seen* by Gertrude Stein, which is almost as bad as my own *The Silver Tassie*, by Sean O'Casey. Nonetheless, the due meed of success (from Dew Mead Bottling Co of Hamilton) will soon be on its way to Anthony Thwaite, who is of course known as the author of *Poems on the Victorian Great*, the travel books *Pomegranate and Date* and *The Sukiyaki Came Late*, and a study of the role of the Arts Council *Hand It out on a plate or make 'em wait: Can poets create with the aid of the State? Notes on the Great Debate*.

But it is his conclusions that have especial relevance to today's concerns. British literature is "the demands of the coarse, vulgar, illiterate aristocracy", while the comparative purity of American literature is "in great measure, to the noble womanhood of our country that is influencing our speech and literature by voice and pen in so many different ways." So watch it, Eric. (Erica Jong, that is.)

And lastly, this from *The Voyage of the Beagle*, in commemoration of the centenary of Charles Darwin's death on April 19: After the possession of these miserable islands had been contested by France, Spain, and England, they were left uninhabited. The Government of Buenos Ayres then sold them to a private individual, but likewise used them as old Spain had done before, for a penal settlement. England claimed her right and seized them. The Englishman who was left in charge of the flag was consequently murdered. A British officer was sent, unsupported by any power, and when we arrived, we found him in charge of a population, of which rather more than half were runaway rebels and murderers.

The theatre is worthy of the scenes acted on it. An undulating land, with a desolate and wretched aspect . . . There is no substantial argument in Geoffrey Grigson's letter (April 16), and I can only assume that his distinguished name has given it its lead position. Dismissing my response as "high-souled", ignoring James Fenton's coolly logical explanation, he resurrects five short poems I published fourteen years ago, as further evidence of a crime he calls "plagiarism", admitted in advance. While those poems were not notably good, they were certainly original, as Grigson might be forced to admit if he had read the SF stories I acknowledged. A Tom Godwin story about a spaceship-stowaway, for example, suggested to me a poem about abortion. My youthful acknowledgment was almost unnecessarily scrupulous. I assume that Grigson only knows of the stories because I acknowledged them. He is a difficult person to please. I think the matter comes down to this: readers who admire *The White Hotel* think the letters attacking it silly; those who dislike the novel are not going to be swayed by counter-arguments. I cannot imagine, therefore, that a prolonged correspondence is going to be fruitful; and I, at least, shall write no more.

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to the editor

'The White Hotel'

Sir, - Following D. A. Kenrick's letter (March 26) attacking my novel, and the replies from myself and James Fenton (April 2), three letters have appeared, on two successive weeks, which do not address themselves to these replies, but seem to wish to unleash aggression. It is the tone of these letters, rather than their substance, which perturbs and depresses me, and prompts me to reply once more.

I am surprised that Emma Tennant (Letters, April 9) leaps to attack a sentence of my letter quoted in the *Times* of March 30, without waiting for the full text promised in the TLS three days later. Because of this, she misrepresents my explanation of the technique I employed. As I explained, it was precisely because I was aware of the problem of separating fact and fiction that I gradually infiltrated a documentary note, Dini Prokhorova's account has the tone of public testimony, not of a private memoir. As James Fenton pointed out, the text itself explains to the attentive reader what is going on. Emma Tennant might feel "moral unease" if she had written *The White Hotel* but I can assure her I do not. My conscience is easy because, in writing my novel, I obeyed the creative laws which it imposed; and secondarily, because the response of Jewish readers has been overwhelmingly positive.

I cannot enter into debate with David Frost (Letters, April 9) because his letter is really an unsolicited review. But I would like to comment on one point. The first section of Lisa's poem was indeed published separately, in a magazine, in 1979, as "a poem in its own right". He asks, "Is it sick, or is it not?" Since, when I wrote it, I did not know where it was leading, I called it simply "The Woman to Sigismund Freud: a dramatic monologue". I knew it to be the beginning of a larger work, but had no idea how much larger. But the poem, then as now, is no more sick, as a consequence of dealing with a disturbed woman, than are Yeats's Crazy Jane poems crazy. This is an elementary distinction, though apparently not to David Frost.

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Going to see Uncle

By Peter Keating

KENNETH HUDSON:
Pawnbrok-
ing
An Aspect of British Social History
169pp. Bodley Head. £7.95.
0 370 30447 0

"On the whole, 'Uncle' has not had a good press," Kenneth Hudson complains on the opening page of *Pawnbrok-ing*. Most people with personal memories of that unwelcome relative will not doubt that Uncle got what he deserved, but Mr Hudson disagrees. The popular image of the pawnbroker as a smart, shady, usually Jewish crook, feeding on the lives of the poor, charging exorbitant rates of interest over the front counter while smuggling stolen goods in at the back door, is firmly and indignantly rejected. "As a class, there can have been few more solid, law-abiding people than pawnbrokers."

The photographs of pawnbrokers included in the present book are those of churchgoing tradesmen, not of pirates.

The reasons for "uncle's" unpleasant reputation are both simple and complex, and lie deep in working-class consciousness. The pawnshop comes second only to the workhouse as an institution that was hated because it operated by instilling shame and inadequacy in those who were forced to use it. Inevitably, it encouraged secrecy among its customers. Before the passing of the 1872

Pawnbrokers' Bill which aimed to standardize interest rates and contracts, a Select Committee sat for two years gathering evidence. Pawnbrokers were eager for sensible legislation and happily co-operated with the Committee, but it proved impossible to get any evidence at all from the lower classes of the people who deal with the pawnbrokers. To admit using a pawnshop would have involved too great a loss of self-respect.

That does not, however, explain why the subject of pawning, undoubtedly one of great importance in working-class lives for at least the past two hundred years, has received little scholarly attention. Hudson blames the "silence of historians" on their middle-class and "library" backgrounds. No sinister motive is imputed to such historians, though their neglect of pawning is seen as curious, misguided, even rather sad. If only they had talked to the people instead of reading books about them they would have realized how incomplete their studies of the working class were.

It is because he writes as an "oral historian" that Mr Hudson can claim to have corrected this bias, but unfortunately his pioneering ambition to fill the pawning gap in British social history tends to become lost in his missionary, enthusiastic, and too often repetitive drive to salvage the subject. Although *Pawnbrok-ing* is organized in roughly chronological order - moving from medieval concepts of usury, through the boom years of the nineteenth century,

down to the present day - it carries little sense of historical control or development. Hudson is so committed to his subject, finding it incomprehensible that anyone (apart from professional historians) could not be fascinated by its details, that he too often allows himself to neglect the basic needs of historical narrative.

There are some memorable insights into the use of the pawnshop by the poor. The buying of clothes on an instalment system from a tally-man and then keeping them as new as possible for weekly loans from the pawnbroker was a widespread practice. Less familiar, though perhaps fairly common, was the pawning of goods or even money before going into the workhouse where inmates would be expected to surrender all personal property. Some people no doubt grew hardened by their frequent trips to see uncle, but more characteristic is the instance of the woman who would regularly take a tram going in the opposite direction to the pawnshop and then back-track so that her neighbours wouldn't guess where she was off to with her tell-tale bundle.

In spite of such moments, Mr Hudson does not break in any significant way the working-class code of secrecy. He insists, and rightly, that without the pawnshop large numbers of the poor could not have survived at all, but this observation is never placed in any economic or political context, or indeed acknowledged as the indictment it so clearly is. Instead, it tends to be used as an argument to demonstrate the import-

ance of the pawnbroker himself, the crucial role he has played, and how in return he has been unjustly maligned. It is the pawnbroker who occupies the most substantial part of *Pawnbrok-ing*, along with the working lives of his assistants, the organization and structure of his shop, and his attempts to establish a public image of himself as a hardworking, respectable businessman.

Individual case studies are taken from an unusually wide range of British cities, with special care being given to the different conditions governing pawning in Ireland. Mr Hudson stresses that "pawning is an essentially an urban phenomenon" and is certainly the increase in the numbers of pawnshops can be shown statistically to follow the growth of major cities. Although there are "reliable" references to pawnshops in Britain by the end of the sixteenth century, it becomes possible to quantify them only much later. By the end of the eighteenth century there were enough for legislation to be passed controlling them, while the 1851 Census listed a total of 4,367 men and women actively occupied as pawnbrokers. By 1900 there were 328 separate pawnshops in Birmingham alone, and twenty-eight even in somewhere as small, relatively, as Plymouth.

The most interesting use Hudson makes of these statistics is to demonstrate the gradual, steady decline of pawnshops since the turn of the century; numbers dropped dramatically even in the 1920s and 1930s, until today many large cities have only

one or two pawnshops, or none at all. Scotland has the unenviable reputation of clinging to the tradition more possessively than England. There are still fifteen pawnshops in Glasgow, a greater number than anywhere else in Britain, and they retain the atmosphere "so suggestive of Victorian and Edwardian attitudes".

Elsewhere the decline seems to have been halted, and Hudson looks ahead to a resurgence of pawning, though now catering not for the poor with their flat-irons, sheets, and best suits, but the affluent middle-class, pawning jewellery to pay for an expensive holiday. The modern pawnbroker is professionally trained, fully aware that he is competing with the banks; he is knowledgeable about exchange rates, accountancy, and business studies; he has even changed his looks. Gone completely - if it ever actually existed - is the shuffling, shady stereotype; the churchgoing tradesman has also disappeared. The modern pawnbroker is more likely, Kenneth Hudson says, to have "the good looks and style of dressing of a young French or Italian film actor".

When he tears himself away from the looking-glass, he is planning exciting new developments: international airports may soon have "pledge offices" where the temporarily embarrassed traveller can leave his digital watch, for example, to be redeemed once he gets home. Fifty years from now, Mr Hudson suggests, the pawnshop may come to be seen as "simply a temporary phase, an historical accident".

Heading for the heat

By Dervla Murphy

JOHN HATT:
The Tropical Traveller
254pp. Pan. Paperback. £2.25.
0 330 26577 6

Modern travellers will rejoice to discover that Francis Galton has been satisfactorily reincarnated in the person of John Hatt. Inevitably there are depressing differences between *Art of Travel* (first published 1855) and *The Tropical Traveller* (first published 1982): the former is subtitled "Shifts and Contrivances Available in Wild Countries"; the latter has to make do with "The Essential Guide to Travel in Hot Climates". As Mr Hatt laments: "The traveller's life is fast being diminished by communism, capitalism and the curse of mass-tourism". Few tourists need advice on "Game, Other means of capture", or "Savages, Management of". But hikers do still get lost and Hatt cautions anyone dependent on the local vegetation for food - if it's red, don't eat it!

Like his earlier incarnation, Hatt is no mere plodding collector of facts but an engagingly idiosyncratic individual with the rare gift of being able to convey his own decided views without ever seeming tiresomely dogmatic. He has some forceful things to say about the world-wide unpopularity of "hippies", a phenomenon which he analyzes shrewdly and kindly. On culture shock, too, he is excellent - "Culture shock is the spiritual equivalent of jet-lag".

You get culture shock when your body is in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, but your mentality is still in Dorset, Surrey. However, not everyone will agree that "The effect of a new culture is disorientating even for the most easy-going." The inoculation against this disease is an intensive pre-journey reading course which mentally transports you to Belo Horizonte, Brazil, before you have left Dorset, Surrey.

Hatt emphasizes that the traveller's choice of books for a journey requires much thought: there will be lots of time for reading, but even paperback books are heavy and likely to seem still heavier if one is trekking in the tropics. Oddly, he never mentions what many travellers consider the most psychologically important function of this library - its

escapist value. However enjoyable one's journey, there will be occasions when a drastic mental change of scene is consoling. A few hours' immersion in the elegant tensions of Miss Woodhouse and Mr Knightley can help a lot if one is lying on small, sharp stones (for lack of any other level space), and covered in itchy fruit-fly bites - after supping off half a tin of sardines and then discovering that the mule has kicked a hole in the water container.

Hatt invites comments, criticisms and ideas. Perhaps in future editions (there should be many) the value of smooth stones - "Travellers do get caught in emergencies without a 'lumpy' paper" - should not be overlooked. In fact there is never any need revelling in the lush landscape while travelling in stony territory. Also, the old-fashioned bush-shirt, with four enormous, securely buttoned pockets, deserves a mention; this garment can simultaneously solve at least six problems. Nor should space-blankets be too readily dismissed. Hatt writes: "I have never found them to be of any help" - yet some travellers wouldn't even venture from Dublin to London without one.

On savage dogs there are of course two schools of thought. Hatt favours stoning, which is fine if the dog's owner is nowhere in sight. If he/she is, this technique - though looked upon as a highly civilized and humane way of dealing with the animal - is not fair to the owner. In such cases, an in-souciant ignoring of the creature may be more prudent - just stroll on, avoiding contempt for dogs who have no self-control. (Although now I come to think of it, the last time I ignored a savage dog the brute pursued me and tore the space-blanket I was wearing to protect me from a blizzard - thus proving Hatt's point that "Space blankets are not indestructible".)

The Tropical Traveller is wide-ranging, practical, wise, succinct and a joy to read. It deserves to be studied attentively, not only by youngsters planning a first journey but by the old hands, too. Hatt probably wasn't born when I first took to the road, yet he has taught me a lot - not least a splendidly lyrical even paperback book is a joy to read. It is suitable for the entertainment of non-English-speaking tribesmen!

The sexual life of a camel, is stranger than you or I think, at the height of the mating season, it tries to bugger the Sphinx.

ANCIENT GREECE

A guide to the necropolis

By Oliver Taplin

M. I. FINLEY (Editor):
The Legacy of Greece
A New Appraisal
479pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford
University Press. £8.95.
0 19 821915 6

M. I. Finley's preface (excerpted on the dust-jacket and in catalogues and publicity leaflets) needs to be quoted at length to bring out all its ironies and half-truths:

The Legacy of Greece, edited by Sir Richard Livingstone, was published in 1921 and is still deservedly popular. If a new appraisal is now being offered, that is not only, or even primarily, because the information needs to be brought up to date, but because a different approach seems desirable. Sir Richard and his ten distinguished colleagues took 'legacy' in its root-sense, a bequest, and so, after an initial paean by Gilbert Murray to the glory that was Greece, they portrayed ancient Greek culture, field by field, beginning with religion and philosophy and ending with art and architecture. This volume retains that element, on a much reduced scale, and then proceeds, in each chapter, to examine what later ages, down to our own, have made of the inheritance from the Greeks. Schematically, one could say that whereas the original *Legacy* was about Greek culture, this version is about its meaning in the history of European culture.

Thus the revolutionaries oust the traditional establishment? Thus Sir Moses Finley would have us view the volume collected sixty years earlier by Mr Richard Livingstone (not knighted until 1931). "Still deservedly popular," I had never read it till now, and cannot recall seeing it in bookshops or on bibliographies; the copy I tracked down in my college library had not been taken out, I strongly suspect, for a generation; if not two. If it is still popular then it is not deservedly so. Most of the essays have dated disastrously, and some never were much good. Percy Gardner (Professor of Archaeology at Oxford) had strong views on naturalism: "the overtrained man, whether the overtrained man, or the body of the intelligence it tends to destroy true womanliness." Livingstone himself deplored the way that literature - "they are parsons' monies who were designed by nature to write not plays or novels but sermons" - and he takes both Dickens and Hardy severely to task for narrow-mindedness and temperamental colouring. It was men like this who excluded Jude.

Clearly Finley is determined that the volume should avoid the presumptuous complacency of its predecessor. But it is not fair to dismiss Gilbert Murray's opening essay as "a paean to the glory that was Greece": it is a balanced and thoughtful assessment of the lasting value of Greece by a man who was at the forefront of many of the liberal movements of the first third of this century. It is a better case for the importance of ancient Greece to the twentieth century than anything in the new volume. If the Greeks really were as some of the reaction against Murray makes out, they have little claim to continuing significance for us. Finley himself writes, for example, of "the monotonous sameness of the column-framed temple". Later in the book Peter Kidson compares the achievement of infinitely subtle variety found in the same quasi-mathematical formula to early Gothic and to the "Art of Pagan" - and it is not hard to think of other disciplined masterpieces which to some eyes and ears will have "monotonous sameness".

The preface evidently sees the great difference between the volumes in what is meant by *Legacy*. Yet it is here that I see least difference between them. There are, honourable exceptions, but most of the essays stick safely to the ancient Greeks in their own time and have little to say about what they have contributed to the fifteen centuries since, the way that these men long dead have continued to create through others. It is a huge and difficult and relatively shirked subject: this is where a New Appraisal is called for and might have been important. Instead the last chapter, written by R. R. Bolgar and titled with bare-faced honesty "The Greek Legacy", races through the very things that the rest of the book should have been about; and it does so extremely well for only forty-four pages. The same number of pages devoted to Politics and Political Theory, half by Finley himself, scarcely stray into our era at all. There is an allusion to Mill and one to Marx - "It is of historical interest only that Marx admired Aristotle (and Luther reviled him)" - nothing about the mixed constitution, or Hegel or the Third Reich, let alone the ideals of free speech or equality before the law. Most of the 1921 essays dwell on the Great War: 1921 of the 1981 replacements make any reference which might set them in the second half of the twentieth century.

I recall no allusion to the alternative cultures of the 1960s and 1970s, the women's movement, the multiplication of small nation states: nor to giants such as Croce, Heidegger or Simone Weil, to say nothing of living shamans such as Northrop Frye, George Steiner or Jacques Derrida (a motley crew who all sail *The Greek Legacy*).

There are those honourable exceptions. K. W. Gransden takes a long view of the heritage of Homer and the Epic, one of the most sensitive indicators of European cultural history, as has become still clearer in the light of no less than four substantial studies published since Gransden wrote his (by Kirsti Simonsuuri, Richard Jenkyns, Frank Turner, Howard Clarke). Bernard Williams's charting of Philosophy is masterly, and lives up to its superb opening declaration, "the legacy of Greece to Western Philosophy is Western Philosophy." It is interesting that three best essays in the volume all hail from King's College, Cambridge: Bolgar, Williams, and Geoffrey Lloyd on Science and Mathematics. Lloyd has less than fifty pages to cover topics given 150 in the 1921

volume (by and large the parts which have survived best). He really has studied mathematics and astronomy and medicine from the eleventh to the nineteenth centuries as well as reading authors like Euclid, Galen and Ptolemy. The fruits are nutritious.

The difference most apparent to me between the old volume and the new escapes notice in the preface. Most of the 1921 contributions are essays, in the sense of being discursive, opinionated, stylish and controversial effusions. Deian Inge takes the opportunity to sound off about what Plato can teach the Gospels and about the "unnatural and unhealthy mentality" of city workers; Arnold Toynbee sweeps across the whole of world history dropping a trail of blazing metaphors. In the new volume only T. G. Rosenmeyer on Drama shows any of this panache as he leaps acrobatically from Borges to Perrault, Ionesco to Kleist, Dryden to Barthes. This show-manship arouses distrust; by and large the 1981 chapters are "professional", that is pedestrian, sceptical, colourless, dragging their out-of-date bibliographies behind them. In 1921

ancient Greece was a sounding-board which teachers and preachers used to echo and magnify their live preoccupations (preoccupations which have not on the whole worn very well). In the 1980s we behave as though it were a mausoleum to which only certified experts are allowed access, a necropolis to be cautiously and correctly described without the distortion of any aesthetic or ethical tendency or enthusiasm. But the legacy of Greece is not only that body of facts which people have "got right", but what they have made of this past, what they have used significantly and creatively for themselves. Better alive and prejudiced than gravely safe.

The index rather typifies this drab New Appraisal (the old volume did not have bibliography or index). Its twelve close-packed columns look professional, but turn out to be drastically incomplete. You will find entries for Antiochus of Ascalon and Antiochus of Syracuse, but not for Hardy, Marx, Nietzsche, Pound, Reinhardt (Max or Karl) or Vico, to name but seven. They are alluded to little enough in the text without adding index to injury.

Further sampling confirms my initial impression: a find things to query in *The Phenomenon of Women* and in *Helen* - I cannot, for example, see why, at the end of the former play, the colourless "I subdued the power of the Sphinx" is transformed into "I... battered to bits the power... and at *Helen*, 255, Helen's "I'm yoked, half-shocked with trouble" adds an infelicity from *Match of the Day* to the text - but on the whole I feel while reading those translations that I recognize the plays and that I may well consult these versions from time to time when trying to make up my mind about a nucleus in the Greek. With *The Children of Heracles*, however, I have found myself in an increasingly unfamiliar and alien world, far from classical Athens and far from Greek ways of thinking, behaving and talking (this applies particularly to the lyric passages). Something seems to have gone wrong with this particular collaboration between poet and scholar. Significantly, while the stage directions and notes supplied in the other two volumes are consistently helpful and accurate, displaying a close acquaintance with what scholarship has revealed of Greek dramatic conventions and theatrical practice, strange and (to be frank) crackpot notions abound in this edition: the choral odes are quite without justification divided up between leader and chorus or else transformed into conversations between individual *choralists*, and the chorus itself is supposed not to consist of a group of old men (given the normal practice of Greek tragedy); the only reasonable inference from *John* 1207 but to be a motley collection of all sorts of people, young and old.

Reviewing for the *Classical Review* the first batch of volumes in this series, Oliver Taplin made a prediction: "The end product will probably be the most lavish and expensive collection of *The Greek Tragedy* on the market - and quite possibly the worst." Expensive and lavish - certainly. On the evidence of the three translations reviewed here, I would be inclined to change "worst" to "most uneven".

In the English of our time

By David Bain

EURIPIDES:
The Phoenician Women
Translated by Peter Burian and Brian Swann
100pp. 0 19 502923 2

Helen
Translated by James Michie and Colin Leach
107pp. 0 19 502870 8

The Children of Heracles
Translated by Henry Taylor and Robert A. Brooks
85pp. 0 19 502914 3
Oxford University Press. £9.95 each.

Reviewing translations is for the professional scholar the equivalent of putting in overtime. A considerable portion of his working life is already occupied in trying to assess other people's attempts to render the sense of passages from ancient authors into acceptable English. These other people are of course his students, who perform such exercises not for financial gain (not directly at any rate) nor to entertain or inform (not consciously at least), but simply to demonstrate their linguistic competence, to show that they understand what the Greek or Latin author is trying to say. Experience in marking these attempts enables the teacher - or at least that is what we like to think it does - to develop an instinct for assessing the pupil's comprehension of his original. "Literal" translation is not necessary: proof of comprehension and quite often a "free" translation shows beyond doubt that the message of the original has been understood.

It is necessary, however, to be aware that there is a clear distinction between free translation and erroneous translation (devotees of Ezra Pound perhaps would disagree); and in reviewing translations, although fairness demands allowances that would not be given to students' exercises (especially if the translation is in verse and its aim is production on stage), I regard it as the reviewer's first duty to apply the examiner's technique: to try to discover whether or not the translator comprehends the text, to investigate the extent to which freedom is encroached upon by error and misunderstanding.

This seems all the more desirable a procedure when confronted by volumes like these, the three latest additions to the series called "The Greek Tragedy in New Translations", of which the general editor is William Arrowsmith. In the first place the claims made for the series in Arrowsmith's general introduction which opens each volume make it

clear that a kind of authenticity is being sought: "it re-creates the entire extant body of Greek tragedy as though it had been originally written by ancient masters wholly at home in the English language of our time". Secondly, the groundplan of the series is that a scholar should collaborate with a poet at the most sensitive volumes under review, although some previous plays have been translated solo either by scholar-poets or, somewhat eccentrically, by poets *tout court*.

Accordingly, I begin in "pedagogic" manner with an examination of sample passages from each of the plays. Part of Iokaste's famous speech in *The Phoenician Women*, where she tries to steer her son away from tyranny and persuade him that equal fathers are best, is translated thus:

Wiser, child, to honor
man, who binds kin to kin, city
to city, ally to ally. Equality
is man's natural law, but the Less is
always
fighting against the More - so dwains the
day
of hate. And Equality established our
numbers.
Equality made measures and weights for
man.
The lightest eye of the night and the
light of the sun
move equal through the cycle of the
year.
Each one yields, neither resents the
other.
So sun and night are slaves for mortal
men.
But you cannot accept an equal share
in your own house, and consign his share
to him.
Where's the justice in that? Why pause
that injustice which you call happiness?
Why
exaggerate its importance? Not 'tis
empty!
Or do you hope to pile up wealth - and
its wealth
of trouble?

This catches the tone of the Greek very well and at the end with the wordplay "wealth", "wealth of trouble" finds a most ingenious way of rendering something similar but not verbally identical. On the other hand, of marks would be for an omission after "exaggerate its importance". Why is there no translation of "is it precious to be highly regarded"? This is what "Not 'tis empty" vehemently rebuts (this line is the *locus classicus* for the collocation of the particles "μὴ οὐ" used to contradict or amend a previous utterance).

From *Helen* I have chosen part of a dialogue scene in which Menelaos and Helen meet and recognize each other (only Menelaos thinks that it is his wife's double he is looking at).

Men. Stand still. Stop darting away.
Don't be afraid.
Helen. Very well, I'll stand here, now I've
reached the tomb.
Men. Lady, who are you? Where face am
I looking at?

Hel. And who are you? Our questions
are the same.
Men. I never in my life saw such a
resemblance -
Hel. You gods! For recognition is a god -
Men. Are you a Greek or a native of this
country?
Hel. A Greek. And you? I long to know
as well.
Men. Lady, you look uncannily like
Helen.
Hel. And you like Menelaos. What does
it mean?
Men. The truth. I am that most unhappy
man.
Hel. O long-lost husband, come to your
wife's arms. I have been waiting for you.
Men. What do you mean - wife? Don't
flatter my clothes.
Hel. The wife that Tyndareus, my father,
gave you.

Again the impression is favourable, accuracy achieved without violence being done to English idiom (invocation of gods presents perhaps an insuperable problem to the translator of Greek drama: there is no way round this particular one) and at most I would suggest only minor alterations ("Translations once made should be tinkered with indefinitely"; K. J. Dover, *Essays in Criticism*, 1980, p. 7, whose essay is a characteristically wise and balanced prolegomenon which all potential translators of Greek tragedy would do well to ponder); "since" for "for" in line six, "let go of my clothes" for "don't flatter my clothes" (the Greek says "don't touch" in the penultimate line, "Finger" has the wrong connotation, suggesting an activity carried out at leisure).

Finally, consider the last part of the speech in *The Children of Heracles* where "Makaria" (she is never named in the play and it is far from certain that Euripides' audience would have assumed that this was the girl's name), going to a sacrificial death on behalf of her family, takes farewell of her brothers:

Honor Iokaste, honor
Your grandmother, Alkmenes, Honor
these men of Athens.
And if someday the gods send you release
from your wanderings and give you back
your home
in Argos, remember me, and the
funeral honors
due the sister who saved you.
Let my honors match
my gift: I stood at your side when you
needed me.
I gave my life for you.
In the place of children
I will never have, these are all my treasures,
these are my reward,
if anything goes with us under
ground.
Nothingness is best if even after death
we endure the troubles which burden us
here on earth.
There's no escape. For human suffering
the strongest medicine, I think, is death.
Here I begin to feel insignificant;
Some of this is arbitrarily free and
there are one or two important
words either omitted or paraphrased.

Further sampling confirms my initial impression: a find things to query in *The Phenomenon of Women* and in *Helen* - I cannot, for example, see why, at the end of the former play, the colourless "I subdued the power of the Sphinx" is transformed into "I... battered to bits the power... and at *Helen*, 255, Helen's "I'm yoked, half-shocked with trouble" adds an infelicity from *Match of the Day* to the text - but on the whole I feel while reading those translations that I recognize the plays and that I may well consult these versions from time to time when trying to make up my mind about a nucleus in the Greek. With *The Children of Heracles*, however, I have found myself in an increasingly unfamiliar and alien world, far from classical Athens and far from Greek ways of thinking, behaving and talking (this applies particularly to the lyric passages). Something seems to have gone wrong with this particular collaboration between poet and scholar. Significantly, while the stage directions and notes supplied in the other two volumes are consistently helpful and accurate, displaying a close acquaintance with what scholarship has revealed of Greek dramatic conventions and theatrical practice, strange and (to be frank) crackpot notions abound in this edition: the choral odes are quite without justification divided up between leader and chorus or else transformed into conversations between individual *choralists*, and the chorus itself is supposed not to consist of a group of old men (given the normal practice of Greek tragedy); the only reasonable inference from *John* 1207 but to be a motley collection of all sorts of people, young and old.

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By Stephen Mills

J. N. TONNESSEN and
A. O. JOHNSEN:
The History of Modern Whaling
Translated from the Norwegian by
R. I. Christophersen
798pp. Hurst. £19.50.
0 905338 23 8

There is a particular pleasure in confronting a familiar period of history from an esoteric point of view. The great events of the last hundred years are only glimpsed, through the perihelion of plunging whalers, as this fine study takes us towards the solution of problems like why Norway dominated modern whaling for three-quarters of a century and what to do with a liver that weighs three-quarters of a ton.

The First World War impinges mainly in the United Kingdom's attempt to corner the market for whale oil, a valuable ingredient of margarine and nitro-glycerine. Neutral Norway was brooded over by the melancholy figure of Sir Mansfield de Cardonnel Finley, London's envoy in Oslo, a man "extremely suspicious by nature, and at all times very well informed". He was there to check, among other things, whether the production company De-No-Fa was betraying the location of its ships so as to sell oil to the Germans under the guise of confiscation. This was quite a ruse, since De-No-Fa was actually a subsidiary of Britain's own Lever Brothers.

The period begins, not with the unification of Germany or the accession of Queen Victoria, but with the invention in 1868 of the Svend Foyn method. Named after the Norwegian who successfully applied it, this was the turning of a cannon-propelled harpoon with a grenade that would explode inside a captured whale. Mounted on a steam-driven whaler, whaling nations to turn from the almost extinct right and grey whales and concentrate on exterminating the faster, more numerous, blue, fin, sei and humpback whales.

The quest took tiny whaling ships on winter voyages half-way round the world. It also took the industry through a boom, lull in the 1920s when Norwegian gunners could command £5,500 a season and poaching by companies resembled today's football transfer market. Mostly from

Vestfold in south-west Norway, the gunners left their marks on the community during their brief sojourns at home. "The following winter the fruits of this joyful reunion would appear: the vicar in the parish nearest to Sandefjord holds a Norwegian national record in christenings - 33 in a single day."

Antarctic whaling was an important factor in exploration and colonization. Britain was cunning in encouraging others to assume that she had already claimed territories - an assumption which sustained her hold on the Falkland Dependencies. Norway unwittingly aided her by transporting officials of the Colonial Office to various deserted islands where they would promptly leap ashore and plant, actually for the first time, the British flag. Some of these colonies may have proved an embarrassment, since they had the tiresome habit of melting during the summer.

Whaling history is populated with sturdy vikings like Thomas Amle, who took to sea when he retired from his Oslo business at the age of fifty-eight. He led record-breaking expeditions until his eighty-second year, when he went down with his ship in a storm off the Feroes. There are also characters of bawls like the German-Russian Count Heinrich Keizerling. He had a knack of establishing new ventures just where major twentieth-century conflicts were about to erupt. He was ruined successively by the Russo-Japanese War, the Bolshevik Revolution, the war between China and Japan, and he ended up choosing Germany in the Second World War.

It is perhaps the fate of the whales themselves, however, which most concerns our generation. The authors trace the inevitable collapse of whale populations, but they do so almost unintentionally, at least without any conservationist polemics. This is not a biological work, it is a commercial history. But through the indefatigable exposition of trading figures, capital raised, changes in share prices and dividends, fluctuations in the markets for different qualities of oil, the paths of destruction emerge. Companies mushroomed as each new locality was seized by modern whaling fever. From Finnmark and Spitsbergen to Iceland, the Faroes and New Zealand, from California to Alaska and south to South Africa, Australia and ultimately even the Antarctic, the pattern of over-

exploitation and bankruptcy has been repeated. The recent situation when, in 1977-78, the Antarctic netted only ninety-five whale units compared with 15,000 twenty years earlier, is not due merely to the greed of Russia and Japan - as many ecologists since the 1970s have believed. The whales have disappeared largely because catch quotas, finally adopted after 1945, were set too high. If the 1950s, that yield might have been sustained to-day, had been between 1938 and 1948 whale oil soared from £14 per ton to £100 per ton. Companies that had consequently expanded were unwilling to cut production and the quota was kept at 15,000. Until the 1960s, comprehensive scientific data were lacking so, although biologists' warnings eventually proved correct, they were hard to justify at the time and were not trusted. Furthermore, from 1959 to 1962 the International Convention for the regulation of whaling distinguished and quotas were suspended. This period of unregulated catching saw whales suffer perhaps their most damaging losses.

In a rare lapse from impartiality the authors blame the Dutch refusal to yield a mere ten units for the breakdown of the North Atlantic whaling industry. But Norway also clung stubbornly to its share, in order, as it turned out, to increase the value of ships it sold, along with their allotted quotas, to Japan. Mostly, however, the Norwegian bias in this book is informative, since it reveals quantities of Norwegian company material to English readers.

This edition is a greatly shortened version of the original, and unfortunately the 225 pages of footnotes have been omitted so for scholars it cannot stand alone. The research was undertaken before 1970 and although the book has been updated to include 1980 figures, it does not take into account the last decade of whaling bibliography. The translation is solid. One's progress is never aided by the elegant phrase but nor is it impeded by ambiguity, for which the translator is to be congratulated.

The Shell Guide to Norfolk, fourth edition, by Wilhelmine Harrod (596pp. Faber. £6.95. 0 571 18057 4) has recently been published. The Wilhelmine Harrod and Charles Lindell appeared in 1938 and this edition has new entries on Norwich and King's Lynn among others.

Modern travellers will rejoice to discover that Francis Galton has been satisfactorily reincarnated in the person of John Hatt. Inevitably there are depressing differences between *Art of Travel* (first published 1855) and *The Tropical Traveller* (first published 1982): the former is subtitled "Shifts and Contrivances Available in Wild Countries"; the latter has to make do with "The Essential Guide to Travel in Hot Climates". As Mr Hatt laments: "The traveller's life is fast being diminished by communism, capitalism and the curse of mass-tourism". Few tourists need advice on "Game, Other means of capture", or "Savages, Management of". But hikers do still get lost and Hatt cautions anyone dependent on the local vegetation for food - if it's red, don't eat it!

Like his earlier incarnation, Hatt is no mere plodding collector of facts but an engagingly idiosyncratic individual with the rare gift of being able to convey his own decided views without ever seeming tiresomely dogmatic. He has some forceful things to say about the world-wide unpopularity of "hippies", a phenomenon which he analyzes shrewdly and kindly. On culture shock, too, he is excellent - "Culture shock is the spiritual equivalent of jet-lag".

You get culture shock when your body is in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, but your mentality is still in Dorset, Surrey. However, not everyone will agree that "The effect of a new culture is disorientating even for the most easy-going." The inoculation against this disease is an intensive pre-journey reading course which mentally transports you to Belo Horizonte, Brazil, before you have left Dorset, Surrey.

Hatt emphasizes that the traveller's choice of books for a journey requires much thought: there will be lots of time for reading, but even paperback books are heavy and likely to seem still heavier if one is trekking in the tropics. Oddly, he never mentions what many travellers consider the most psychologically important function of this library - its

escapist value. However enjoyable one's journey, there will be occasions when a drastic mental change of scene is consoling. A few hours' immersion in the elegant tensions of Miss Woodhouse and Mr Knightley can help a lot if one is lying on small, sharp stones (for lack of any other level space), and covered in itchy fruit-fly bites - after supping off half a tin of sardines and then discovering that the mule has kicked a hole in the water container.

Hatt invites comments, criticisms and ideas. Perhaps in future editions (there should be many) the value of smooth stones - "Travellers do get caught in emergencies without a 'lumpy' paper" - should not be overlooked. In fact there is never any need revelling in the lush landscape while travelling in stony territory. Also, the old-fashioned bush-shirt, with four enormous, securely buttoned pockets, deserves a mention; this garment can simultaneously solve at least six problems. Nor should space-blankets be too readily dismissed. Hatt writes: "I have never found them to be of any help" - yet some travellers wouldn't even venture from Dublin to London without one.

On savage dogs there are of course two schools of thought. Hatt favours stoning, which is fine if the dog's owner is nowhere in sight. If he/she is, this technique - though looked upon as a highly civilized and humane way of dealing with the animal - is not fair to the owner. In such cases, an in-souciant ignoring of the creature may be more prudent - just stroll on, avoiding contempt for dogs who have no self-control. (Although now I

Being and being thought

By Mary Tiles

G. E. M. ANSCOMBE:

Collected Philosophical Papers
Volume One: From Parmenides to
Wittgenstein

141pp. £10. 0 631 12922 7

Volume Two: Metaphysics and the
Philosophy of Mind

239pp. £15. 0 631 12932 4

Volume Three: Ethics, Religion and
Politics

161pp. £12. 0 631 12942 1

Oxford: Blackwell.

Among contemporary philosophers G. E. M. Anscombe stands in a class on her own, resisting classification into this or that school of thought. She is perhaps most widely known through her association with Wittgenstein: as one of those responsible for bringing to publication the fragmentary manuscripts which he left behind him, and as the person who has devoted much time to teaching others, not what Wittgenstein said, but how to think for themselves in thinking about Wittgenstein's writings. However, these volumes include only two papers explicitly concerned with Wittgenstein's philosophy, and while one may find Wittgensteinian concerns underlying many other papers, it would be wholly inappropriate to apply the label "Wittgensteinian" to Professor Anscombe's own philosophy.

What she does share with Wittgenstein is a way of doing philosophy which I can only describe as experimental. My image of an experimental philosopher is of a person who can be taken by a problem (such as "What distinguishes actions which are international from those

which are not?" (Paper 8, Volume Two) which even the philosophically unsophisticated can be led to see, seeking an understanding of the puzzling conceptual phenomena as they are found, without appeal to an overarching philosophical theory couched in the technical jargon of academic philosophers. If there is an overarching position here, it is the view (expressed by Wittgenstein) that there can be no philosophical theories: that the task of philosophy is to show us how to think our way clearly around and out of the conceptual problems which are thrown up by thought about other matters such as whether it is always wrong to kill an innocent person).

The general absence of philosophical jargon and its accompanying preconceptions does not, however, mean that these papers are easy reading. Anscombe's willingness to question what many have taken for granted (such as, that remembering is a kind of experience, and one which gives content to statements about the past (Paper 12, Volume Two), and her ability to convince us that what had seemed obvious is far from being so, can induce a feeling of intellectual disorientation. Unable to see where the argument can now lead, one cannot anticipate the turns it takes. Frequently the structure of the pieces becomes apparent only in the way in which the harmonic and rhythmic structures of a rich and complex piece of music gradually emerge after repeated listening. There are papers in these volumes which, after a first reading, remain largely impenetrable to me. There are others from which I have learnt a great deal, but only after several readings.

However, when the papers are col-

lected together, a certain unity of theme and purpose can be discerned in the corpus which is not apparent when its parts are taken in isolation. In this way many of the papers shed light upon each other. The themes concern intentional action, causality, and the relation between thought and reality.

The purpose, or at least part of the purpose, is to provide the groundwork for an adequate moral philosophy. For Anscombe, as a deeply convinced Catholic, a prerequisite of an adequate moral philosophy is that it not rule out as impossible the Hebrew-Christian ethic. In "Modern Moral Philosophy" she argues that every academic philosopher since Sidgwick has written in such a way as to exclude this ethic. This is because it is a feature of the Hebrew-Christian ethic that certain things are prohibited simply in virtue of their description as such-and-such. Identifiable kinds of action, regardless of any further consequences (a position whose practical consequences are illustrated in Paper 9, Volume Three, which considers the Catholic position on birth-control). But Anscombe claims, all the best-known English academic philosophers are committed to theories according to which "e.g. it is not possible to hold that it cannot be right to kill the innocent as a means to any end whatsoever, and that someone who formulates a principle to cover as any form of consequentialism." She argues that moral philosophy should dispense with the notion of moral obligation and concentrate, as did Aristotle and Plato, on virtue and the specific virtues, such as justice. But she recognizes that to be in a position to do so it must first

investigate concepts, such as "action", "intention", "pleasure", and "wanting" - investigations to be undertaken whilst "vanishing ethics totally from our minds". It is just such investigation which we find pursued in the papers on the philosophy of mind in Volume Two.

But equally, any consideration of human action must raise questions about causality and confront determinism. Here Anscombe's probing calls into question many of the doctrines about causality which, with the overwhelming success of Hume's account, have come to seem so obvious as not even to amount to substantive theses. (For example, "that being caused is - non-trivially - instantiating some exceptionless generalization saying 'that such an event always follows such antecedents.'") Nevertheless, Hume is evidently a great admirer. The papers on causality (as well as that on promising) take his philosophy seriously and are a source of insight into his position, while showing, with care and originality, why it cannot stand unchallenged.

The question of the relation between thought and reality, or perhaps better, between thought and its objects, is at once the most pervasive and the most elusive of Anscombe's themes. It is first taken up in the paper which opens the first volume: a discussion of Parmenides' contention that it is the same thing that can be thought and can be (from which he concludes that "what is not and cannot be" cannot be thought). This Parmenidean utterance recurs in several different contexts. Anscombe's concern here is to steer a course between "the falsehoods of idealism and the stupidities of empiricist realism". But this is a notoriously difficult course to steer

and she does not underestimate the hazards.

The retreat from atomism... is far more difficult than might appear. It seems clear that thoughts are characterised by what they are of, with no substantive being of their own; but how this is so is so intensely obscure that one surveys the obscurities of the scholastic *esse intelligibile*, whose actuality is the same thing as the actual occurrence of a thought of such-and-such, with a not totally unfavourable eye.

But why should one be so concerned to try to steer this difficult course? There are many possible motivations but one, conjectured reason is as follows: Anscombe argues that one should accept Hume's conclusion that promises have no force antecedent to human conventions, but sees in this conclusion the key to the refutation of Humean empiricism - the fact that the conventions governing our linguistic practices are what give meaning to words, not our ideas or mental images. She goes on to claim that "not only promises, but also rules and rights, are essences created and not merely captured or expressed by the grammar of our languages." But in spite of this conclusion she resists the idea that the True and the Good are similarly created by the grammar of our languages. That is to say, she resists linguistic idealism. In the final paper in Volume One she claims that in his last work (*On Certainty*) Wittgenstein did indeed succeed in escaping from linguistic idealism and thus in attaining realism without empiricism. The route by which this is said to be achieved is, I confess, not clear to me, although the importance of seeking to discern it, if it exists, will certainly draw me back to ponder the enigmas of this particular paper.

FICTION

The matriarch's mission

By Alan Bold

EDWARD STEWART:

For Richer, For Poorer

402pp. Gollancz. £7.95.

0 575 03115 5

Edward Stewart's new novel opens in 1944 with a Vice-Presidential inauguration in Pennsylvania Avenue, and audaciously presents its formidable heroine Kitty Kellogg in an epic flashback that finally returns the reader to the beginning of the story. The confident, headlong style is justified, since the novel depends on the credibility of Kitty. She is a woman with a mission; though born to poverty in Pennsylvania she is determined to wage a successful war against the oil-wealthy family who murdered the father of her child.

In rapid succession Kitty meets the Communist union leader Tyrone Duncannon, conceives a child by him at the first attempt, watches him die in the Bartonville massacre of strikers, then swears vengeance on the Stokes family whose economic power broke the strike. She sacrifices everything to this great cause and carries a cross around with her like a cross. This explains the Gothic appearance of the house she comes to haunt as an employee of the Stokeses: "The Stokes mansion was a house of corridors and stairways and endless darknesses; of murmurs and whispers and silence. For all its electric light and bustle of servants, it did not strike Kitty as a happy house. It stood exiled on its hill, lonely and brooding

behind its guarded fence."

There is a sense of *déjà vu* about that scenario which will be familiar to students of American Gothic. In order to introduce some variety into the narrative, Stewart adds to the dramatic touches of symbolism and gothic references to contemporary history. Kitty, after all, needs an environment to expand in. She seduces Johnny Stokes, the artistic son of the tyrannical oil man, and passes off Duncannon's child as a genuine member of the Stokes family. However, there is blood on the infant; at the christening Kitty is insulted and assaulted. Old Stokes takes drastic action with tragic consequences for the poor family he holds responsible. As a result of this development there is a violent confrontation between old Stokes and his wife; the family, in fact, is depicted as disintegrating before the Irish eyes of Kitty.

Such a heroine has to keep other company than those she wishes to destroy, and great names begin to drop into the saga. At Kitty's wedding reception William Randolph Hearst, Joseph P. Kennedy, Billy Sunday and Gloria Swanson appear. When the Stokeses move to New York there is an appropriately impressive cast of celebrated characters. Edith Rockefeller, divorced daughter of John D., dances drunk with Gene Tunney. Cole Porter sends Kitty a dozen roses. Inevitably, too, there are the stars of the period, Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald. When Kitty's child cries there is Zelda, on cue, to "burst a bottle of champagne at Kitty. 'This should keep the brat quiet.'"

Before the fall

By T. O. Treadwell

TAD SZULC:

Diplomatic Immunity

495pp. Heinemann. £7.50.

0 434 75330 5

Tad Szulc is an eminent American journalist who has long specialized in Latin-American affairs. *Diplomatic Immunity* is his first novel. A journalist's reasons for turning to fiction are presumably as various as those of anyone else, but there is one motive which tells a story in its essential truth, without the restraints inevitably imposed by strict adherence to the codes of the profession. All journalists know their limits; they are unmovable or unattributable and the temptation to serve them up, lightly disguised, in the plot of a novel is not always resisted. The difficulty is that readers can never be certain about the status of the stories set before them - truth or fiction, how are we to know?

The question is important in this instance because *Diplomatic Immunity*, though a thin and wooden novel, is frightening if its implications have any basis in fact. The story is set chiefly in the Central-American Republic of Malagua, a semi-fictional location and a few historical details with El Salvador; but is in most respects concerned to Nicaragua. The plot concerns a young person who has just been appointed US ambassador to Malagua in spite of the hostility of the State Department and the CIA. The president of Malagua is Juan Ferrer, a brutal, ruthless, and politically adroit tyrant who is the first successive member of the family to have ruled that country now reduced to a private fiefdom.

Ferrer relies heavily on the United States for aid, and he is popular in his country because of the influence of the CIA, but Szulc is a good and experienced journalist, and he ought to know.

side and the capital, and signs of disaffection are apparent in the middle classes and the Church. Ferrer desperately needs American arms to shore up his rule, and the question of whether or not he is to be given them is the central issue of the novel.

Julia Savage immediately comes under pressure. The guerrillas set off a bomb to greet her on her arrival in Malagua and things go on getting more difficult. She establishes contact with forces opposed to President Ferrer and finds herself falling in love with one of the guerrilla leaders, a fiery young Jesuit who has conveniently lost his religious convictions and is on the point of leaving the Church. After much agonizing, Julia decides that Ferrer's fall is both inevitable and desirable, and she recommends that American weapons be withheld.

It turns out, though, that Ambassador Savage is only nominally the representative of American policy in Malagua; the real power is held by Jim Morgan, the sinister CIA station chief who is unequivocally pro-Ferrer and who treats official American policy with contempt. Julia persuades the President of the United States to deny Ferrer the arms he needs, but Morgan and the CIA supply them covertly. In spite of this the dictator is overthrown, yet the success of the revolution doesn't solve Malagua's problems.

Diplomatic Immunity is a roman à clef about the revolution in Nicaragua. Juan Ferrer is a version of President Anastasio Somoza, last of a family that governed that unhappy country, enriching themselves in the process, from 1937, and Ferrer's overthrow clearly parallels that of Somoza by the Sandinista revolutionaries. Clumsy as Szulc's book is as a work of fiction, it is thoroughly convincing in its representation of the forces governing American policy in Latin America. It is to be hoped that he exaggerates the ideology and influence of the CIA, but Szulc is a good and experienced journalist, and he ought to know.

The first issue of *Interzone*, a new British magazine of science fiction and fantasy (Volume 1 No. 1, 31pp. £1.25), contains work by: John Harrison, Keith Roberts, Angela Carter, John Sladek and Michael Moorcock.

Plotting for lucre

By Ian Hislop

HERBERT LIEBERMAN:

Night Call From a Distant Time Zone

313pp. Hutchinson. £7.95.

0 09 147140 0

Night Call from a Distant Time Zone poses as a financial thriller. But as we persevere with the author's struggle to fashion a credible story from the plight of the falling dollar, we begin to suspect that the conventions of the genre, while pursued with admirable stamina, are inadequate to sustain his interest. At this point the novel acquires a certain perverse fascination. What is it that compels Herbert Lieberman to write about the world of high finance?

The lengthy descriptions of the mechanics of the currency markets lead one to suppose that it may be a desire to display some intimate knowledge of the inner workings of that world. The dust-jacket proclaims that the novel is "disturbingly well-researched". It is therefore somewhat disconcerting to find, in a detailed account of the London gold fixing, that the names of only two of the five market members are given correctly. The author's obsession with the jargon of the foreign exchange market might well be excused if its complexities did not so bemuse him. We find it hard to believe that the protagonists are making millions out of currency arbitrage when spot/forwards are confused with forward swaps.

The development of the plot does little to restore the author's credibil-

ity. By natural inclination he seems more suited to the vocation of librettist than thriller writer. For where but in some as yet unexplored realm of opera would one ever find an American foreign exchange dealer, stealing into a Japanese financier's castle in Liechtenstein, with a plan to abduct the financier (during a banquet to celebrate his marriage to his French mistress) and bring him to trial for fraud in the United States, while his son by his former Japanese wife (whom he has murdered) lurks in the grounds with a loaded pistol, disguised as a cook and hidden behind a potted camellia, plotting to redeem the family honour?

A tale as preposterous as this must conceal some more subtle purpose. The quotations from military history which preface each of the sixty-three chapters hint at some analogy between high finance and war. In case the analogy eludes us, we are shown the foreign exchange dealer planning his campaign against the Japanese financier on a tattered square of parchment at the top of which the word STRATEGICS appears in large hand-drawn block letters. But the author could have thought of some more delicate way of creating dramatic tension than by means of a detailed description of the dealer reenacting Rommel's desert campaign with toy soldiers, just before a grenade is lobbed into his basement.

Beyond all these war games, what is it, finally, that attracts Lieberman to the world of high finance? The scene in which the Japanese financier huddles by his father's treasure in the bowels of the castle makes us suspect some darker motive. Could it be the lure of filthy lucre?

Rules for meaning things

By Simon Blackburn

IRVING BLOCK (Editor):

Perspectives on the Philosophy of

Wittgenstein

322pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £15.

0 631 19550 5

I told him he ought not simply to state what he thinks true, but to give arguments for it, but he said arguments would spoil his beauty, and that he would feel as if he was dirtying a flower with muddy hands. . . I told him I hadn't the heart to say anything against that, and that he had better acquire a slave to state the arguments.

Wittgenstein acquired more people to state his arguments than Russell might have approved of. Fourteen of them do so in the present volume, which grows out of a colloquium held to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of his death, in London, Ontario in 1976. Kenneth Blackwell's interesting essay is the only biographical one, and contains the above quotation from Russell. The rest of the papers concern the arguments. Slightly under half of them discuss earlier themes, and slightly over half of them later ones, and many consider the relationship between the earlier and later works.

One theme which surfaces in a number of essays is that of finding an adequate way to describe the difference between the early and late philosophies. The *Tractatus*, according to the official story, is realistic, atomistic, systematic, attached to a correspondence theory of truth, and a truth-conditional theory of meaning; the *Philosophical Investigations* rejects the realism, the correspondence theory, is hostile to systematic semantics, and perhaps sympathetic to theories of meaning which have nothing to do with truth conditions. The trouble is that almost all the labels in this story are shifting and unreliable. Some of the writers here, notably Saul Kripke, and Michael Dummett, endorse some or all of the official story, but others, notably Brian McGuinness and Peter Winch,

cast doubt upon it. To know which is right we need a more authoritative account of the positions on either side of the contrast; here, as always, our exegesis is no better than our philosophy: we are confined by our own understandings of the terms in which we describe others.

Hidde Ishiguro, Brian McGuinness, David Pears, Anthony Kenny, Peter Hacker and Erik Stenius each discuss aspects of the early philosophy. The recent resurgence of discussion about inner mental codes whose elements are structured in ways which enable them to represent similarly structured parts of the world shows how difficult it is to escape from the picture theory of meaning. Professor Stenius manfully defends this theory against Wittgenstein's later rejection (which he believes to be only apparent). In an elegant paper comparing the earlier and later philosophies of language, Kenny puts his finger on the fundamental problem: the source of the lines of projection associating elements of the picturing medium with elements of the world. Pears discusses the independence of elementary propositions, and Ishiguro gives a very useful account of puzzling aspects of Wittgenstein's attitude to the theory of types. Peter Hacker has more ambitious aims: he presents a confidently detailed development of the picture theory. Whether we expect that elusive vision to be so captured depends, as I have already suggested, on whether we can rely upon the hardness of the terms - correspondence, agreement, objects - used in the description.

Michael Dummett finds in the *Investigations* passages rejecting any general distinction between the sense of an utterance - its content, or the particular piece of information or transformation it expresses - and its forward, the way this content is put forward, or which examples would be interrogatively, assertively, in command, metaphorical, story or riddle. However, the passages to which he refers (192, 23, 309, 363) do not show Wittgenstein directly denying this distinction. He is concerned to stress the unlimited

variety of forces, and to fight against the "mentalistic" account of what it is to grasp a sense. The former point is certainly compatible with the distinction, just as say, a parallel point about games is compatible with the distinction between playing a game and earning a living. As Dummett says, systematic semantics cannot be done without the distinction (neither can logic). Wittgenstein is sometimes taken to be hostile to any systematic semantic account of a natural language. But in fact I doubt whether he would have been - he would probably have done better to allow the possibility of such accounts, but deny that they had sufficient philosophical interest to bear on his issues.

Professor Anscombe casts doubt on "a theory of language", meaning a description showing how noises are significant speech, from a different direction. She notes how sophisticated a procedure it is to divide speech into words. Acoustics does not do it for us (as the sound, but not the word "slab" may appear in "This slab is hot", and printers' divisions are "in part purely conventional". She seems to be arguing that because

of this there is no propriety in conceiving of the "word" apart from its meaning, and in asking what gives it the meaning which it has. It is hard to follow, but if she is suggesting this argument, she is surely mistaken. Suppose we concede that words are identified, in practice and theory, by their semantic roles; a word is best thought of as something whose sense is a meaning-determining feature of a sentence (which is why until you know something of what for worders mean, and it is all gabbled). It does not follow that we cannot thoughtfully imagine the same feature having different effects, nor that we should not ask what makes it true that it has the effects it does, and not others.

There are useful papers on the later philosophy by Peter Finch, D. Z. Phillips, Paul Ziff, and Frank Cioffi. The latter pair take radically different attitudes to some of Wittgenstein's more gnomish pronouncements about aesthetics, human sacrifice, and the like, and make an agreeable contrast with each other. The former are concerned with more general issues in the theory of knowledge and of truth in the later philosophy - in particular with the threat of "relativism", which hangs over it.

But it is the final paper, by Saul Kripke, which will be the reason why many people will want this book. Kripke's detailed, patient, and immensely insightful exposition of the rule-following considerations has already gained a wide underground currency. The published version will dominate discussion of the *Investigations* for some time to come. Kripke shows how close Wittgenstein comes to scepticism about the existence of rule-following - and it is the following of rules which gives any terms any meaning. Indeed, on this view there is no "fact" that we mean things by our words. The verdict that we do so has no truth-conditions, although it has the different property of "assertibility conditions". Here Kripke needs the distinction which Winch, for example, attacks. In some puzzling sense these assertibility conditions make a difference to membership in a wider community, meaning that although we can dignify any of us as meaning things by our words, it would be illegitimate so to dignify the "private-language" speaker "considered in isolation". Kripke implies that he has reservations about this contrast. In effect it shows Wittgenstein to believe that only communities can have the kind of "practice" which gives terms meaning, and that the "private-language" speaker cannot. Kripke believes that the material supporting this comes before 1202 in the *Investigations*. But up until then we only have discussion of the necessity for precise, technique, custom, with words. The apparently verificationist argument of 1247 onwards is likely to be needed to disqualify the private language speaker's bid for these things. But whether this is so or not, Kripke does great service in exposing the structure of this part of the book so persuasively. His essay also contains penetrating discussions of other things, such as dispositions, the use of computer analogies, and similarities between Wittgenstein and Hume, and Berkeley. It is a model of balanced clarity.

D. J. Enright

Fitting the Crime

Wojtek is incarcerated in a fortress for committing a satire against the Kaiser. It's really quite a fine and private lodging. No heating of spoons and platters in a fastness. Though meals are sometimes late arriving. They serve him generously with pens and paper. Sentenced to six months of hard writing. Then he'll walk out. In his bulging valise a nightshirt, a dayshirt and a manuscript. Someone will publish it, others will read it. To live at the fin du siècle was all but bliss.

Crisis talks

By Monty Haltrecht

ALLEN DRURY:

The Hill of Summer

484pp. Michael Joseph. £8.95.

0 7181 2117 1

In Allen Drury's latest novel, which is set in the immediate future, the new Russian President Yuri Sorapin is ready to go ahead with plans for world conquest. He orders manoeuvres on land, sea, in the air and in space, and though their warlike purpose is suspected, it is proven only when a detector reveals a build-up of missile-launching submarines off Cuba. After bringing down an American jet and provoking an ultimatum, Sorapin withdraws, underservedly earning himself the world's approval, but leaving behind as much weaponry as his plan requires. Whether he succeeds ultimately will not be known until we have the promised sequel.

This is an ambitious novel, centred on great personages and great events: the crisis is "quite likely the worst the world has seen". There are quotations at the head of each chapter urging the reality of the Russian threat - for example, Stalin: "As long as Capitalism and Socialism exist, we cannot live in peace. In the end one or other will triumph." And yet for all this, *The Hill of Summer* is a slight work, with a large stage, but a small action. The world events take place off the page and are perfunctorily described, and the plotting is at times clumsy.

The novel mainly consists of exchanges between the two Presidents in UN and NATO meetings. Drury, who has been a Washington political correspondent, knows these procedures well. The Soviet Union is characterized by inhuman efficiency, and Russians are smug, beady-eyed, gray-faced. Drury quotes humanity with inefficiency, praising America fondly as a "crazy, bumbling, idealistic country", given to the "often inept but basically good-hearted and well-meaning ways of democracy". The new American President, Delbacher, is portly and paternal - to him and his side along the laughter and the happy family relationships. The defector, who yet may prove a double agent, offers as his creden-

tials an adored wife and children (effortlessly whisked to safety in one sentence by the CIA) and a fetching grin. These alone make him an honorary American.

From his beginnings as a writer Drury has assumed an essential connection between personal likeability and political outlook. Hence, Sorapin remains unredeemed - and therefore inhuman and unbelievable. Delbacher is equally unbelievable. In contrast to his immediate predecessors he is "direct, decisive - and, well, Presidential", but he is not permitted any range of human behaviour; either, and has to remain within the bounds of his "normal, easy-going amicability". Drury, dogged and over-insistent, will clearly never tender himself empty on this particular theme - but his method is liable to rebound against himself, since his opponents, condemning his crudity, can all too easily feel justified in dismissing his thesis without giving it any serious consideration. The real opposition, against whom he raises his voice and metaphorical fist, comes not so much from the Russians as from complacent Western liberals, and the left-wing establishment, "the starchy-eyed, bap-

mind, film-flammable dupes who, unknowingly, did the Soviet's work in America."

There is a submerged plaintive note in the novel, as well as much protest against those ready to criticize American attitudes while taking up pacifist, conciliatory attitudes to the aggressor. There is approval for the unnamed woman Prime Minister of England, who asserts that "the responsible nations of this world know full well that in a world without the friendship of the United States they would be lost". A private meeting between the Presidents gives Delbacher the chance for an outburst: "You are Evil. Evil - Evil. I cannot tell you the contempt I feel for you. It goes beyond capacity." This rather hot air serves mainly as relief for the author's own feelings. The verbal confrontations do not impinge greatly on the action, as the Soviet leader, in spite of being boldly confronted, proceeds almost imperturbably to get his way. For all that is at stake, there is no tension. There is a simple pleasure in seeing a strong man standing up to a bully - but as in all *Boy's Own* stories, we already know that the bully must always turn tail.

Criminal proceedings

FRANK PARRISH:

Snare in the Dark

216pp. Constable. £5.95.

0 09 464380 6

Dan Mallett, Frank Parrish's poacher hero, has to clear himself from the suspicion of murder: a gamekeeper who finds Mallett setting snares for pheasants gets a crossbow bolt through the neck. A neat plot, pleasing characters, and a fox's eye view of the countryside.

THOMAS HENEGE:

A Cargo of Tin

201pp. Deutsch. £6.95.

0 233 97449 0

Norwegian shipowner is short; the crime is investigated and narrated by the firm's Finanzdirektor, John Hennrichsen, who finds the investigation takes him to the Far East and into

complicated international skulduggery. The book reads rather as if it has been written by a computer hooked into the financial pages, but the detail is solid and the intrigue not unconvincing.

JONATHAN GASH:

Firefly Gadroon

208pp. Collins. £6.50.

0 00 231296 4

A glimpse of an antique Japanese firefly cage in an auction room: and dealer Lovejoy is off again, scouring his native East Anglia for a hidden treasure. Implausibilities abound; but the pace is too hot to inquire, and the reader's critical faculties are in addition numbed by the continual stream of information about antiquities that is being poured, like hot oil, into one's ear. But if it is a sensation one can get to enjoy.

Backgrounds for being in

By Richard Shone

ISABELLE ANSCOMBE:
Omega and after
Bloomsbury and the Decorative Arts
176pp, 124 illustrations. Thames and
Hudson. £10.50.
0 500 23337 3

The term "Bloomsbury art" is a comparatively recent one and embodies a recognition of certain qualities and standards, in life as much as in work, which were shared by a small group of artists. Such qualities, though not exclusive to this group, are found in concentration in its work and serve to distinguish it from even its close contemporaries in the Post-Impressionist movement in England. The three conspicuous names are Roger Fry, Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant; there are no other contenders, even though at the time of their early association, during the explosion of modern French art into England and the start of the Omega Workshops, there were others whose work, if generally more conservative in its modernism, shows certain Bloomsbury characteristics. Their subsequent development, however, only underlines their fundamental difference from the Bloomsbury artists. The future Vorticist Frederick Elton collaborated with Fry and Grant for two or three years as a close associate; other names include Henry Lamb, Nina Hammett, Edward Weller, Carrington and the French painter Henri Doucet, killed in the First World War. Later associates included Frederick Porter, Bernard Adeney, Keith Baynes, Douglas Davidson, the designer Allan Walton and the sculptors Dobson and Tomlin. Nearly all of these artists are included in the present book by virtue of their contribution to the decorative arts during the period 1912-40, as pioneered by the Omega Workshops and by Grant and Vanessa Bell after the Omega's demise in 1919. This is the first study to be devoted exclusively to this aspect of Bloomsbury's contribution to English art. As such it is to be welcomed for its clear style, detail and generous selection of illustrations which juxtaposes documentary photographs with those taken recently by Howard Grey at Charleston, Monks House and other surviving shrines.

This said, there is one important reservation to be made and that concerns the book's conception. Isabelle Ancombe has mixed biographical detail with her consideration of the works themselves, with the result that the book is thrown out of balance by the repetition of familiar biographical facts at the expense of concrete facts on the commissions, designs and achievements of the artists. As a result, Vanessa Bell emerges as the most considered and considerable figure; certainly the author appears to believe she was the

best painter of the group. This is an opinion increasing in currency (although in the early 1930s, Segonzac rated her the best painter in England). As a designer, however, this estimate of her seems questionable. Grant is infinitely more various and fertile in his designs. He attempts more and if, as is obvious from some of the illustrations, this has resulted in more failures, his success rate has been impressive. He has the gift for choosing surprising images which fit neatly into specific, often unusual spaces. If at times he can be too fussy and overripe, Vanessa Bell, especially in her later work, leans towards the pretty and delicate - qualities she roundly condemned in 1912 as the bugbear of English interiors.

The biographical passages are long enough to admit psychological speculation, yet too brief to give a complete picture. The paragraphs on Bloomsbury's pacifism, for example, are slightly misleading, while the personal relationship between Grant and Vanessa Bell was more complicated and neurotic than is suggested. On the other hand, an advantage of Isabelle Ancombe's biographical narrative is that it conveys the domestic background against which the designs were produced, and the probable fact that, without Vanessa Bell, Grant would have achieved much less in a vein in which, as commentators from Fry onwards have consistently claimed, he worked most happily. I, for one, hope that some of the rigorously constructed landscapes and still-lives produced concurrently with the decorative work and often regarded as meretricious, will be given their due - a reversal of opinion perhaps already in train.

Isabelle Ancombe begins with a discussion of Roger Fry's reasons for establishing the Omega and his stimulating effect on its artist-employers. She adds some useful details on the Marlborough workshop in Paris and is well-qualified to place the Omega within a European context of design and the decorative arts. But she seems to waver in her estimate of the Omega. Although its textiles and pottery were praised at the time, I doubt whether they were much known after the First World War - even if Paul Nash's designs owe more to the Omega's example than to perhaps generally recognized. At one point, the author defends the Omega's collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Isabelle Ancombe's copious illustrations and references may help to arouse a feeling for conservation in the indifferent hearts

of curators and owners. Furthermore, the restoration of Charleston, currently proceeding, will undoubtedly increase interest in the 1930s; the painted panels and screens were a generalized back-

ground, often muted in colour, against which working and living continued. Hard work came easily to the two protagonists of this book. They undertook innumerable commissions,

ours on pottery did not always emerge from the firing as they were intended; surfaces might not take.

But among these artists' most successful surviving pieces I would single out the generous, plain pottery made by Fry for the Omega, Grant's marquetry "Elephant Tray" and the 1912 embroidered fire-screen (superbly reproduced here in colour), Vanessa Bell's fabric designs for the Omega and Allan Walton, her blue and white dinner service for Charles Clift, and Grant's fireplace in his studio at Charleston. In later years both artists decorated pottery made by Quentin Bell, designed book-jackets and undertook modest private commissions. One of Grant's last was a standing screen for the American poet David Shapiro. Isabelle Ancombe suggests all this activity with economy and an eye for detail. Happily she is not uncritical, but the impression she conveys of the isolation of these artists' decorative work may derive from inadequate analysis of its relation to their easel painting. What imagery is common to both, what ambitions were reserved for one or the other, where does one stop and the other begin? The difficulty in answering the last question is perhaps a measure of Grant and Bell's success.



From the book reviewed here, a dinner service commissioned from Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell by Kenneth Clark in 1932. Painted on ordinary glazed white Wedgwood plates which were subsequently fired are portrait heads of famous women including an array of queens - Elizabeth I, Victoria, Marie Antoinette and the Queen of Sheba; among the images discernible are portraits of "Miss 1933", Grete Garbo, "Mme la Princesse de Mettenich" and self-portraits of the artists.

Omega and in Grant and Bell's later decorations.

Many of these, however, have gone. Houses were bombed, rooms ruthlessly white-washed or hastily dismantled by later generations, furniture and painted panels put into attic or outhouse as fashion changed. The painted panels for the dining-room of Penns-in-the-Rocks, perhaps the artists' finest collaboration, admired by Yeats, were rescued by Southampton Art Gallery. Even so, their lack of context considerably diminishes their impact. They were intended not only for a particular setting (even down to especially constructed lights and reflecting mirrors) but to be seen behind and alongside people talking and eating and moving about. This is the key to the Bloomsbury style. You were not invited to gaze in surprise (as you are with Rex Whistler or some of the surrealist-derived murals of the

their largest schemes being the decoration of Berwick Church and Grant's three panels for the liner Queen Mary. But they rarely refused a friend's plea for a bookplate, a painted pot, or design for a chair cover. Hence the amusement roused by Kenneth Clark's patronizing lines in his autobiography: "In an attempt to revive his [Grant's] interest in decorative art we asked him and Vanessa to paint us a dinner service." Never had the artists been so fully or interestingly employed as when they squeezed in this further commission. Grant maintained that his decorative work was easy to do - it was a different part of himself at work than when he was before an easel. Casualness, spontaneity, a calligraphic abandon ensured a fluent line and quickly achieved results. Of course, it could go wrong. There was sometimes excessive patterning and fluency could become ragged; col-

whom no mention is made was Dr M. J. Rendall who, when he retired from Winchester, restored Butley Priory with excellent judgment, and welcomed undergraduates there on "digs".

But omissions are few, and the survey is very thorough and expert. As in previous volumes, a remarkable collection of photographs is provided, though, presumably not because it could be found of Little Wenham Hall which is "one of the most important 13th century domestic buildings in the country", perhaps permission to photograph it was withheld. The series, which is expected, will run to ten volumes, should help to prevent the destruction, through ignorance, of these smaller, more homes and their like which, no less than the parish churches, are one of the chief riches of the English heritage, and were the chief source of patronage of the arts. As Gibbon noted, "The splendour of the French nobles is confined to their town residences; that of the English is more usefully distributed in their country seats."

Servants of the shari'a

By C. J. Wickham

ANN K. S. LAMTON:
State and Government in Medieval Islam
An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory: The Jurists
382pp. Oxford University Press.
£19.50
0 19 713600 1

Muslim political theory is one of the three great strands of political philosophy, along with those of the Greeks and the Western Christians. We know less about it, largely because it has had little or no impact on modern Western (ie post-Hobbesian) political thought. We ought to know more, especially today, since a modern state based on Islamic principles owes more to medieval Islamic tradition than a state based on Christian principles ever does to the Gospels. Intelligent commentators, attempting to make sense of difficult and inconsistent material in a logical, ethical, and even (occasionally) politically sensitive way, are always interesting, and the Islamic tradition has produced plenty of these; in the person of Ibn Khaldun, indeed, it produced perhaps the greatest of all ancient or medieval political theorists.

Each of the three traditions is founded on completely different axioms, and it is for this reason, rather than because of the different political histories of their various homelands, that they have remained so wholly distinct, no matter how often they may have borrowed from each other - the fact that Fakhr al-Din, together with Aquinas a few decades later, both assume that man is a political and social animal, does not make either of them Aristotelian except in certain habits of argument. The axioms of the Muslim tradition were, by contrast, based on remembered (and falsified) historical experience: for Islam had the good - or bad - luck to have its tenets expressed in a political system within the lifetime of its divinely inspired founder, and all

subsequent political theory has been justified through the many readings of the events of the first forty years of the Hijra, AD 622-61, the years of "Right Rule" before the collapse into historical time with the supposedly wicked Umayyad dynasty. The fact that Mohammed's divine mission was inextricably bound up with state-building left the Muslims not only unhelpfully obsessed with history, but also with political legitimacy - there is much more Muslim political philosophy than in either the Greek or the Christian tradition.

The keys to this legitimacy in mainstream (Sunni) thought, as Ann Lambton stresses, are divine law, the *shari'a*, based on the Qur'an; the historical traditions of the early years (*sunna*); the consensus of the Islamic community; and (last and least) human reason. These make up a complex system that became more or less frozen in the early ninth century, after which time no lawmaking or policies that diverged from *shari'a* principles, no matter how necessary, was ever legally justifiable - a position that ought to have given rise to instructive political criticism, but in fact did not, for the rejection was too uncompromising.

The purpose of the state was always, in principle, to serve the *shari'a* and act as its means - Muslims had no independent organization to further divine ends, unlike the Christians, who had the Church. The state was made necessary by men's natural aggression; they needed authority to curb them. Islamic political theory concentrated very largely on the nature of this authority and the boundaries inside which it was lawfully active - which meant, for them, the obligations and qualities of the just authority, rather than the limits of its sovereignty and his relationship with the ruled. It was still less concerned with the question of whether autocracy was actually necessary - for most Muslims, autocracy was God-given. It was the certainty of this, coupled with the actual political travails of the Islamic community when its leaders (caliphs or, in religious terms, imams) became successively unjust, impotent, chal-

lenged by successful usurpers in outlying areas, and, finally, destroyed by the Mongols in the thirteenth century, which gave the arguments of the theorists their bite: how was order to continue to be legitimate when legal authority, its foundation, was so lacking? Even unjust rulers had to be brought into the system, to allow the whole of the social order to function. Their actions could not be legitimate, but their authority had to be. Al-Ghazali, the best of the traditional juristic theorists, and a man deeply suspicious of all contemporary rulers, expressed it best around the year 1100:

There are those who hold that the imamate is dead, lacking as it does the required qualifications. But no substitute can be found for it. What then? Are we to give up obeying the law? Shall we dismiss the *qadis*, declare all authority to be valueless, leaving the population to live in sinfulness? Or shall we continue as we are? We know it is not lawful to feed on a dead animal: still, it would be worse to die of hunger.

The ironies of Muslim political thought lie in the increasingly desperate attempts made by its theorists somehow to sanction the increasingly un-Islamic political systems they lived under, so as to preserve the fundamental moral structures of life. It is no criticism of these theorists to point out that in doing so they became ever more removed from the real political problems which surrounded them. (Christians who only needed to legitimize the Church, found the imperfections of states much less of a difficulty.)

Professor Lambton follows this theme through in profuse detail; it is the most explicit theme in her book, as it is in the texts she analyses. *State and Government* is set out as an introduction to Islamic political theory, or rather to one element in this, the writings of the jurists. Philosophers and administrators are mentioned only in passing. This is unavoidable given the amount of material she has to cover, but it is also

a pity. The fact that two of the most interesting writers, al-Farabi and Ibn Khaldun, come largely from a philosophical tradition, makes one wish for a lot more of that tradition here - perhaps it will come in a later volume. 330-odd pages is a short space in which to cover even one element of Islamic political writing, and much of what Professor Lambton writes is inevitably sketchy, or based on secondary material, especially her chapters on the early years.

But some things have been left out that should not have been. One, necessary only in that the book is introductory (it includes short accounts of the rise and fall of dynasties), is a fuller treatment of the juristic schools. There were four major schools, established by the year 900 or so, into which nearly all the Sunni theorists fit, but we never properly discover how. As a result, each individual jurist seems to appear on his own, influenced by his predecessors almost by chance; the impression thus created is an exceptionally misleading one, in a body of thought so tied to precise lines of tradition as that of Islam.

More serious is what comes close to being an abatement from commentary. Professor Lambton's exposition of her twenty-odd writers remains more or less that: exposition. When she shows how al-Farabi and Fakhr al-Din fit Greek thought into the standard Muslim discussion of legitimacy, she contents herself with pointing out the elements they have borrowed; she hardly tries to explain in what ways these procedures alter either the Greek or the Muslim tradition. The Muslim tradition did indeed happily absorb Greek ideas that appear at first sight inimical to it; but it would help us to be shown by what means these were fitted so comfortably into so different a moral world. No Western writer, after all, could properly avoid doing that with Aquinas. Few of the individual chapters have conclusions; nor has the book as a whole.

What Professor Lambton does give us is a full account of a considerable array of theorists, who are in them-

selves very instructive. The crises of actual history had salutary effects on such writers, particularly in the eighth and ninth centuries (with Ibn al-Muqaffa) and the eleventh (the age of the two major traditional jurists, al-Mawardi and al-Ghazali, and of the most realistic of the Shiites, al-Tusi), and we can see here how this happened. She gives us a detailed survey of the Shi'ite position, too, though this was less politically preoccupied than that of the Sunnis, as there has been no lawful ruler in history for the Shi'a since AD 661; the Shi'ites were more concerned to legitimate responsible service to illegitimate authority than to legitimate authority itself, and what they wrote about authority had more to do with eschatology than it did with politics.

Consideration of all these theorists puts in perspective the achievement of Ibn Khaldun, who stood a little apart from the tradition, being as much a philosopher as a jurist, and who was (unlike most of them) politically very active in fourteenth-century North Africa. None the less he can only be understood in the context of the great jurists like al-Ghazali and Fakhr al-Din. Ibn Khaldun took all this, with a small dose of Aristotle, and turned it into something entirely new: the science of historical change. History proceeded by means of laws of development based on latent social processes and even economic requirements, which he set out with a complexity unequalled before Marx, in a cyclical pattern of rise and decline, watched by a circular contraposition of centre (city) and periphery (desert) that still exercises its spell on modern political theorists, notably Ernest Gellner. Even the early caliphs and the Umayyads fit into this scheme, and Ibn Khaldun's science thus goes so far as to reveal - by making inevitable - Mu'awiya's revolt in 661 against 'Ali, Non-shari'a law, too, is partially authorized if it is based on reason. But it cannot. In the end, success as well as the *shari'a*, indeed, even economic works better by Islamic law. God moves the world through the *shari'a* as much for Ibn Khaldun as for any of his predecessors, and in this book we see how.

Ideals of holiness

By Alexander Kazhdan

SERGE HACKEL (Editor):
The Byzantine Saint
253pp. Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, 12 Ladbroke Grove, London W11 2PB. £6.50 post free.
0 704 0451 6

Every society creates its own ideal of holiness and behaviour and the ideal of medieval and particularly of Byzantine society was embodied in the figure of the Saint. The University of Birmingham's Fourteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies was devoted to the concept of sanctity, and its major contribution was to inaugurate and develop two intertwined approaches to the subject: the social function of the Byzantine holy man and the evolution through time of the concept of holiness.

The trend towards a social approach is mirrored by the fact that no less than five of the contributors begin with a reference to Peter Brown's articles, especially to "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity" published in 1971, which is a sixth author, E. Patlagean, who calls it "étude classique". But what properly is the social approach? There is no unanimity among the participants over this. To some of them a neutral, vague formula seems to suffice: "The Christian holy man is always ready to participate in the daily life" (H. Drijvers); "The Byzantine saint was an active participant in the affairs of the world" (R. Morris). The presence of the holy is said not to exclude the temporal world of human society, but manifestly more specific: Robert Browning said that a group of lives of saints whose activity was largely among re-

latively humble people, whereas Patlagean emphasizes the connections of saints with the upper layer of society. The contradiction is not so striking as it seems at first sight: Browning has based his observations primarily on early lives (Symeon the Younger, Theodore of Sykeon), while Patlagean uses lives from the ninth to the eleventh centuries and stresses their difference from earlier hagiographies. "The popular saint" says Browning, "appears as the direct antithesis of the ideal citizen of classical antiquity." In P. Magdalino's paper we find, similarly, that the holy man, acting "in his paradoxical, anti-social way... provided a release from the tensions of too much civilization". In other words, the holy man of late antiquity was conceived as the negation of an ancient ideal so that the figure of the holy fool became signally popular.

By the eleventh century, however, as L. Ryden demonstrates, the attitude toward those who "feign that they are fools" had changed: they were regarded as dangerous hypocrites. In this connection we may recall the Life of St Philaretus, the "fooly" of whose behaviour was significantly softened and limited to his self-damaging "anti-thrift". In the earlier period "the behaviour of the holy fool was full of sexual curiosity, of a constant play with fornication and indecency, and it is no accident that a parallel figure, that of a former harlot, should also draw the attention of early hagiographers. But by the tenth century the saint had become decent and in a sense aristocratic. St Eudodimus was a general, St Mary the Younger an ideal housewife; the scene shifted away from the desert or the open square to monasteries and the inner chambers of noble houses.

An especially surprising change occurs during the Comnenian period

(the twelfth century) and a brilliant study by Magdalino makes it clear that at this time intellectuals fought against the traditional ideal of holiness, and overbearing sanctity was submerged beneath the surface of an elitist culture. Two additional observations could be provided in support of this theory: first, there is evidence that the ruling circle tried to suppress popular hagiography; the Patriarch Nicholas (1147-51) ordered the Life of St Parasave composed by a peasant in the vulgar idiom to be burnt; and second, the military and chivalric ideal of behaviour was eulogized by poets and historians. When, after a long period of stagnation, during the Comnenian and Nicaean periods, hagiography re-

vived, the holy man acquired a new and strictly political garb, representing (as R. Macrides shows) the civil and ecclesiastical hierarchy as symbols of anti-Palaeologian resistance.

Although Byzantine sainthood originated, in a sense, as a negation of ancient moral ideals, the cult of saints, as S. Vryonis emphasizes, retained many pagan traits. Early Church Fathers such as John Chrysostom or Asterius attacked the pagan aspects of the panegyric, a local religious festival connected with the celebration of saints - though later, Byzantine society came to terms with this semi-pagan practice and incorporated it into its rituals.

One section of the book under

Easterners' seats

By John Buxton

JOHN KENWORTHY-BROWNE,
PETER REID, MICHAEL SAYER,
DAVID WATKIN:
Burke's and Savills Guide to Country Houses
Volume 3: East Anglia
280pp. Burke's Peetrage. £25.
0 85011 000 0

The "East Anglia" of this third volume in Burke's and Savills invaluable dictionary of English country houses includes Cambridgeshire as well as Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex; are quite properly ignored. (Has any recent piece of legislation been less well-considered, or put more needless obstacles in the way of historical research than the ludicrous reshuffling of counties in 1974? No one except a bureaucrat will ever think of Badminton House as anywhere but in Gloucestershire - that

"four-letter county" of Avon invites no loyalty. Here Cambridgeshire has not been allowed to annex Burghley House.) The counties and the houses within them are listed alphabetically by the name of the house, not of its village. Frommels; now sink beneath a reservoir; is so listed, not under Hanningfield; and Cliford's Hall must not be sought at Stoke-by-Nayland. Nearly a thousand houses are here described, and it is a measure of the wealth of Norfolk that almost half the book is taken up by this county, described by Michael Sayer of Sparham House.

In his excellent introduction to the Norfolk gazetteer Mr Sayer observes that the county is "a large and fertile agricultural county, largely unaffected by industrialization"; it has therefore retained more of its character, and many more of its houses, than Essex, which has been so heavily infected by the proximity of London. The distance of Norfolk from London has also, as always meant that many of its families have retained their ancestral estates of 120

family estates remaining - there were nearly twice as many in 1900 - one in six is still held by the family which held it 300 years ago; in Essex there are only two such.

The special character of the series lies in the brief records given of the families who built, altered, restored and lived in these houses - in the treatment of houses as buildings not only of aesthetic but also of historic interest. Houses are built to be lived in and used, not to be converted into immaculately preserved museums, with drugged carpets and cords across the stairs. It is much more pleasing to enter a house where a flower-basket and a pair of scatelets, a cap or two on a settle, and a couple of fishing rods leaning against the wall greet one. For it concerns us to know who lives or lived here, what sort of a family they were: a prime minister at Houghton, a Dutch merchant at Hovingham, a townshend of the turnips at Raynham, Rider Haggard at Bitchingham, Edward Fitzgerald at Rudge Hall, a historian at Bel-

brigg, lawyers, politicians and, above all, farmers. Literary associations are few, though P. C. Wodehouse's family was of Kimberley Hall, and Dickens took Rolls Park (now demolished) as the model for The Warren in *Barnaby Rudge*; Jane Scrope, for whom Skelton wrote *Phyllis Sparrow*, was at Carrow Abbey, but as a novice, and so she gets no mention. And surprisingly in a series which records and often illustrates houses that have gone, there is no reference to Little Saxham, Sir John Crofts' house, which Thomas Carew celebrated in a well-known poem.

An additional advantage of the concern with the inhabitants of these houses is that it allows humour to come in. Among the owners of Eleanham Hall was "the ample Hon. Dorothy Bagge"; Lady Warwick of Easton Lodge was "converted to socialism 1893 as a result of an extravagant ball given at Warwick Castle"; George Lewis Wey at Spencers Great Yeldham was "an egotistical philanthropist given to religion and literature". One such owner of

whom no mention is made was Dr M. J. Rendall who, when he retired from Winchester, restored Butley Priory with excellent judgment, and welcomed undergraduates there on "digs".

But omissions are few, and the survey is very thorough and expert. As in previous volumes, a remarkable collection of photographs is provided, though, presumably not because it could be found of Little Wenham Hall which is "one of the most important 13th century domestic buildings in the country", perhaps permission to photograph it was withheld. The series, which is expected, will run to ten volumes, should help to prevent the destruction, through ignorance, of these smaller, more homes and their like which, no less than the parish churches, are one of the chief riches of the English heritage, and were the chief source of patronage of the arts. As Gibbon noted, "The splendour of the French nobles is confined to their town residences; that of the English is more usefully distributed in their country seats."

Fifty years on...

The TLS of April 28, 1932 carried the following review by Pile Gordon of *The Official History of the Gallipoli Campaign, Volume 2*, by Brigadier-General C. F. Aspinall-Oglander:

The vacillation of the Government before it could come to its decision to order the evacuation of the Peninsula was well described. The Government's task was complicated by contradictory reports as to the possibility of a further advance by land or sea, of the sinking moral of the enemy and of the increase in quantity and quality of his ammunition supply, by political considerations, by the wishes of Allies, by fears as to the possible effect of a withdrawal on prestige, on Moslem opinion in India, or as to the capacity of British sea-power to keep open communications with the troops in Gallipoli in the face of winter storms and hostile submarines. When it did decide the season was in the opinion of many

already too far advanced to make evacuation possible except in the form of an ignominious and almost annihilating disaster.

In these pages the survivors from the Peninsula will almost live through their campaign again. The heat, the flies and the malarial fever which they brought; the lack of water, which had to be so wearily carried up the steep hills; often only to be wasted at the top where starved or an "over" from the trenches, perished the tin can or laid out the bearer; the depressing rumour that the Aquitania, with the 11th Division Headquarters and six battalions on board, had really been sunk on July 5 instead of having just escaped by the skin of her teeth; the actual sinking before their eyes of the *Triumph* on May 25 and of the *Majestic* on May 27; the gloomy knowledge that our ammunition had run so low that no matter what the

enemy might do in using our beaches as a target our guns were rationed to two rounds a day apiece; all will come back to them, as will also memories of short leave to Kephala or fly-blown Mudros, with the wind blowing fustils of inflated entrails from the French slaughter-house across the harbour. Then there was the bitter weather, towards the end, when the War was frozen into immobility and the ammunition batteries sat on the top of their parapets and looked at each other during the unofficial truce enforced by the November blizzard which killed 200 men and afflicted 5,000 with frost-bite among the British alone. They will find comfort in the way in which their privations have been noted, their triumphs recorded, and their failure as it seemed at the time, mitigated by the heartening assurance that their hard work in Gallipoli prepared the way for the final victory after the *Truce in Palestine*.